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Random Sketches on Scottish Subjects



RANDOM SKETCHES  
ON  
SCOTTISH SUBJECTS

BY  
JOHN D. ROSS

AUTHOR OF "SCOTTISH POETS IN AMERICA," ETC., ETC.



ALEXANDER GARDNER  
Publisher to Her Majesty the Queen  
PAISLEY ; AND 26 PATERNOSTER SQUARE, LONDON

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1896





1904 86.22.0

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**Dedicated**  
TO  
BENJAMIN F. LEGGETT, B.H.D.,  
WARD, PA., U.S.A.,  
(ONE OF NATURE'S NOBLEMEN; A SWEET POET AND AN EMINENT  
EDUCATIONIST)  
IN GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF MANY  
FAVOURS RECEIVED AT HIS HANDS.

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# Random Sketches on Scottish Subjects.

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## THE OLD SCOTTISH BALLADS.

I HAVE always had a tender and sincere regard for the old Scottish ballads. In my boyhood days they were a continual source of delight to me, and I used to pore over them at all convenient hours. A goodly portion of them were also committed to memory, and to-day I can repeat them and enjoy them as much as I did in the years gone by. What a curious collection of old legendary lore they are, to be sure. What wild adventures on land and on sea do they chronicle; what wonderful deeds of daring in love and in war; what heroic self-sacrifices; what hairbreadth escapes; what mysterious doings of spirits, water kelpies, goblins, fairies, and so forth. Really, when I take up a volume of these old favourites I am always sure to immediately alight on one that just suits the particular mood in which I may happen at the

moment to be. Even the particular haze of antiquity which envelopes so many of them has a strange fascination for me, and I love to linger in their company. Well do I remember the first of these ballads that attracted my attention. It was the little one entitled "Geordie." How dramatically it opens :

There was a battle in the north,  
And nobles there were manie ;  
And they hae killed Sir Charlie Hay  
And laid the blame on Geordie.

"Geordie" is supposed to have been George Gordon, fourth Earl of Huntly, and the time of the incident related in the ballad is in the reign of King James V. Consigned not only to prison but to death for a crime of which he is innocent, the earl writes a long letter to his spouse acquainting her with the fact and requesting her immediate presence by his side:

Oh, he has written a lang letter ;  
He sent it to his ladye ;  
" It's ye maun come to E'nbrugh town  
To see what word's of Geordie."

When first she look'd the letter on,  
She was baith red and rosy ;  
But she hadna read a word but twa  
Till she turned pale as a lily.

But this was no time for idle grief. She had to be up and doing, and so she brushed her tears aside and gave orders to

“Get to me my gude gray steed,  
My men shall all gae with me :  
For I shall neither eat nor drink  
Till E'nbrugh town shall see me.”

And so with her men at arms she mounted her gray steed and rode in all haste to where her lord was imprisoned. Nor did she arrive any too soon, for

First appeared the fatal block,  
And syne the axe to heid him,  
And Geordie comin' down the stair,  
And bands o' airn upon him.

But though he was chained wi' fetters strong  
O' airn and steel sae heavy,  
There was na ane in a' the court  
Sae braw a man as Geordie.

The king however seems to have been conveniently near, and she at once appeals to him, in the regulation fashion of the time, for a pardon :

O, she's down on her bended knee,  
I wot she's pale and wearie ;  
“O pardon, pardon, noble king,  
And gie me back my dearie !

“I ha'e born seven sons to Geordie dear,  
The seventh ne'er saw his daddie ;  
O pardon, pardon, noble king,  
Pity a waefu' lady !”

But alas her appeal found no responsive chord in the heart of James V. Indeed it seemed only to anger him, for he called out :

“Gar bid the heiding man mak’ haste.”

Convinced that this line of action will not avail her any, the lady tries to move him to pity through an offer of her worldly possessions.

“O noble king, tak’ a’ that’s mine,  
But gie me back my Geordie.”

Still the king proved unrelenting, and the lady was just about to call on the men who had accompanied her, to attempt a rescue by force, when a crafty old earl ventured the suggestion :

“Gar her tell down five thousand pounds  
And she’ll buy back her Geordie.”

This suggestion seems to have pleased the king. It harmonized with his own ideas on the subject, and he spoke out accordingly.

But five thousand pounds was a very large sum of money to get together in so short a notice, yet the noble lady was not to be thwarted in her design by such a small matter as that. She immediately appealed to the bystanders, and they seem to have been liberally supplied with spare cash in those days, for



Some ga'e her merks, some ga'e her crowns,  
Some ga'e her dollars many,  
And she's told down five thousand pounds  
And she's gotten again her dearie.

And the ballad appropriately concludes with a hint as to what might have taken place had the earl not been liberated, and a compliment from the earl to his lady which all will agree with me in saying she richly deserved :

She blinket blythe in Geordie's face  
Says, "Dear I've bought thee, Geordie,  
But there would have been bloody bodies seen  
Or I had tint my lordie."

He clasped her by the middle sma',  
And he kissed her lips sae rosy ;  
"The fairest flower of womankind  
Is my sweet bonnie ladye."

I do not point out this ballad as being the best, or even one of the best of the old Scottish ballads, but simply because it was the one which first thrilled me with delight and led me to continue my studies in this direction. I have read many ballads since then, much finer ones in many respects, I will admit, but "Geordie" has a charm for me yet, and ever will have.

Then there was the ballad of "Tamlane" with its weird, uncanny story. Truly a wonderful creation and one well calculated to make a vivid and lasting impression on the mind of a young reader.

Tamlane was an earl's son who had been spirited away by the fairies when a boy and had grown up to be a young man under their spell. The favourite haunt or gathering place of these fairies was a place called Carterhaugh; and Janet, an earl's daughter and the heroine of the story, is strictly forbidden to go near the place. Prompted by curiosity, however, she pays it a visit, meets with Tamlane and of course falls in love with him. He explains matters as follows :—

When I was a boy just turned of nine  
My uncle sent for me  
To hunt and hawk and ride with him  
And keep him companie.

There came a wind out of the north,  
A sharp wind and a snell  
A dead sleep then came over me  
And frae my horse I fell.

The fairy queen she caught at me  
And took me to hersel',  
And ever since in yon green hill,  
With her I'm bound to dwell.

And we that live in fairy-land  
Nae sickness know nor pain,  
I quit my body when I will  
And take to it again.

Our shapes and size we can convert  
To either large or small,  
An old nut shell's the same to us  
As in a lofty hall.

We sleep in rosebuds soft and sweet  
We revel in the stream,  
We wanton lightly on the wind  
Or glide on a sunbeam.

It seems however that this life with all its charms has one drawback. The fairies, for some reasons, have to part every seventh year with one of their company to his satanic majesty, and Tamlane being "young and fair and fat" feels convinced that he has been selected as the next victim to be sacrificed. So he asks Janet to save him and to help him to regain his liberty and tells her how she can accomplish this. She is to repair to the Miles Cross at midnight and take holy water with her and sprinkle it all around in a circle. He will ride past with the fairies, and—

The first company that passes by  
Stand still and let them gae ;  
The next company that passes by  
Stand still and do right sae.

The third company that passes by  
All clad in robes of green  
It is the head one of them all  
For in it rides the queen.

I'll there ride on the milk white steed  
With a gold star in my crown,  
Because I was a christened knight  
They gie me that renown.

First let pass the black, Janet,  
And syne let pass the brown,  
But grip ye to the milk white steed  
And pull the rider down.

And he goes on to explain how, when in her arms he will be transformed into a snake, an adder, a red hot piece of iron, a toad, an eel, a dove, a swan and last of all a mother naked man.

She is then to cast her green mantle over him and the fairies' spell will be broken. So Janet repairs at midnight to the Miles Cross and awaits developments. Soon the fairy crowd make their appearance and so carefully does she follow Tam-lane's instructions that he is soon rescued and the fairies' control over him is at an end. At this—

Up then spake the fairy queen  
Out of a bush of rye :  
“ She's ta'en away the bonniest knight  
In all my companie ;  
But had I kenn'd Tamlane,” she says,  
“ A lady would borrow thee,  
I would hae ta'en out thy twa gray een  
Put in twa een of tree !  
Had I but kenn'd Tamlane,” she says,  
“ Before ye came frae hame,  
I would ta'en out your heart of flesh  
Put in a heart of stane.  
Had I but had the wit yestreen  
That I hae coft this day  
I'd paid my kane seven times to hell  
Ere you'd been won away.”

And who can read and ever forget the tragical ballad of "Gil Morice" full of excitement and horrors, yet containing some exquisite passages of poetry for all that. Take the description of the hero for instance.

His hair was like the threads of gold  
Drawn from Minerva's loom ;  
His lips like roses dropping dew,  
His breath was all perfume.

His brow was like the mountain snow  
Gilt by the morning beam ;  
His cheeks like living roses glow,  
His e'en like azure stream.

The boy was clad in robes of green  
Sweet as the infant Spring ;  
And like the mavis on the bush  
He made the valleys ring.

But the rest of the old Scottish ballads are just as spirited and entertaining as "Tamlane" and "Gil Morice" and it would be a comparatively easy matter to extend this article to a dozen or more columns by simply taking up the more prominent ones and describing their special features and plots. There are "The Dowie Dens of Yarrow," "Annan Water," "Fair Annie of Lochryan," "The Queen's Marie," "Katherine Janfarie," "Clerk Saunders," "Sir Patrick Spens," "Johnnie Armstrong," "Gilderoy," "Fair Annie's Ghost,"

“ The Gay Gos-Hawk,” “ Hardy Knute,” “ Sir James the Rose,” “ The Drowned Lovers,” and various others, all more or less meritorious and constituting as fine a collection of poetical literature as one could wish to read. Let me therefore conclude by advising any one who is not already familiar with the ballad minstrelsy of Scotland to procure a collection without delay. In doing so I can assure them that I am inviting them to the enjoyment of a rare literary feast.

## LADY NAIRNE AND HER SONGS.

---

No country is so rich and varied in song literature as Scotland. Her hills and glens, woods and streams, people and history, have been celebrated and made famous the world over through the simple and exquisite language embodied in the lyrical productions of her sons and daughters; and although many of these gifted song writers have belonged to the higher and educated classes of society, yet it is a well-known fact that the greatest number of them have sprung from the lowly and the poor, from the peasant's cot in the glen, the shepherd's hut on the hillside, or the crowded alleyways and the busy thoroughfares of our large commercial cities. It is also a notable fact that the fame and popularity of many of our song writers rests wholly on one particular song which they have written. Thus—Miss Jane Elliot immortalized herself in the annals of Scottish song by "The Flowers of the Forest;" John Lowe by "Mary's Dream;" Alexander Lyle by his happy and musical "Kelvin Grove;" George Halkett by "Logie o' Buchan;" Lady Ann Barnard by her

beautiful and sad story of "Auld Robin Gray;" Adam Skirving by his ever popular version of "Johnnie Cope;" John Ewen by "The Boatie Rows;" William Laidlaw by his simple and affecting description of "Lucy's Flittin';" Jean Adams by what Burns termed "The most beautiful song in the Scots or any other language," namely—"There's nae luck about the house;" Lady Baillie by her curious and old worded song, "Were na my heart licht I wad dee;" Isabella Pagan by her sweet and gentle "Ca' the yowes to the knowes;" Jean Glover by her equally sweet "O'er the broom amang the heather;" John Lapraik by the noble and affectionate lines which he addressed to his wife, beginning, "When I upon thy bosom lean and fondly clasp thee a' my ain;" Richard Hewett by "Roslin Castle;" William Glen, who recalls so vividly the times, trials, and privations of "Bonnie Prince Charlie," in "A wee bird cam' to our ha' door;" Mrs. Grant by her inspiring "Roy's Wife of Ardivalloch;" and Francis Semple by his humourous and always enjoyable "Maggie Lauder." These and many others which I might mention have been awarded high places among our prominent song writers, and their names have become familiar to us all through one particular song which they have added to, and by which they have increased the value and the beauty of



the songs of Scotland as a collection, and their memories will never fade or pass away into obscurity as long as the language is understood in which their respective productions are written. I wish, however, to draw your readers' attention to one who has endeared herself to every Scottish heart, not on account of one song, but on account of the galaxy of illustrious songs which she composed and which she has now bequeathed to our keeping. I allude to Caroline Baroness Nairne, one of the finest songstresses which the world has ever produced.

Lady Nairne was born at the "auld house" of Gask, in Perthshire, on July 16, 1766. Her father was one of those staunch old Jacobites who openly espoused the cause of the Stuarts, and proved his loyalty to Prince Charles Edward by taking an active part with him in the rebellion of 1745-6. The disastrous results of this rebellion are well known to every reader of history. It extinguished for ever the hopes of that gallant young prince, and compelled him and his principal followers to retreat to the Continent for safety. Among the latter was Lord Nairne, who thus spent seventeen years of his life in exile. When he found it safe to return home, Dr. Charles Rogers tells us: "He would not permit the names of the reigning monarch and his queen to be mentioned in his

presence ; and when impaired eyesight compelled him to seek the assistance of his family in reading the newspapers, he angrily reproved the reader if the "German lairdie and his leddy" were designated otherwise than by the initial letters "K. and Q." This extreme Jacobitism, at a period when the crime was scarcely to be dreaded, was reported to George III., who sent the Laird his compliments as *Electors of Hanover*, with a message testifying respect for the steadiness of his principles." Lady Nairne was christened Caroline, in honour of Prince Charles, and in early life received an excellent education. She was an exceedingly pretty child, and at the age of eighteen was acknowledged to be one of the most beautiful, intelligent and refined young ladies in Scotland. Her sweet and gentle manner, combined with her many charitable gifts so modestly bestowed upon the poor, gained for her the poetical title of "The Flower of Strathearn," but no one suspected her of being the authoress of the many charming songs which were then attracting by their beauty the admiration of the public. Many of these compositions first appeared under the assumed initials of "B. B." in Smith's *Scottish Minstrel*, and so careful and anxious was Lady Nairne to conceal her part in them that even the publishers of the work were not aware of the real name and position of their gifted contri-

butor until many years after their labour was completed. Since that time her songs have enjoyed a world-wide reputation; and deservedly so, as with few exceptions they are worthy to be placed beside the noble productions of her great countrymen—Ramsay, Burns, and Tannahill. They are all exquisite little pieces of poetry. Take, for instance, “The Rowan Tree” or “The Auld House.” What tender recollections of childhood’s days do these two songs recall! Nothing could be more fraught with sweet, and, in many cases, sad memories of the past than the verses:—

Oh! the auld house, the auld house,  
What tho’ the rooms were wee!  
Oh! kind hearts were dwellin’ there,  
And bairnies fu’ o’ glee;  
The wild rose and the jessamine  
Still hang upon the wa’,—  
How many cherished memories  
Do they, sweet flowers, reca’!

. . . . .

The mavis still doth sweetly sing,  
The blue bells sweetly blaw,  
The bonny Earn’s clear winding still,  
But the auld house is awa’.  
The auld house, the auld house,  
Deserted tho’ ye be,  
There ne’er can be a new house  
Will seem sae fair to me.

. . . . .

Still flourishing the auld pear tree  
 The bairnies liked to see,  
 And oh, how often did they speir  
 When ripe they a' wad be !  
 The voices sweet, the wee bit feet  
 Aye rinnin' here and there,  
 The merry shout—Oh ! whiles we greet  
 To think we'll hear nae mair.

Or take again her well known song, "The Land o' the Leal," which was composed on the occasion of the death in infancy of the first-born of a personal friend of Lady Nairne. We certainly could not wish for any verses that would touch our hearts more deeply or engage our sympathies more earnestly than these do :

I'm wearin' awa', John,  
 Like snaw-wreaths in thaw, John,  
 I'm wearin' awa'  
     To the land o' the leal.  
 There's nae sorrow there, John,  
 There's neither cauld nor care, John,  
 The day is aye fair  
     In the land o' the leal.

Our bonnie bairn's there, John,  
 She was baith guid and fair, John,  
 And we grudged her richt sair  
     To the land o' the leal.  
 But sorrow's sel' wears past, John,  
 And joy's comin' fast, John,  
 In joy that's aye to last,  
     In the land o' the leal.

Sae dear that joy was bought, John,  
Sae free the battle fought, John,  
That sinfu' man e'er brought  
    To the land o' the leal.  
Oh ! dry your glist'nin' e'e, John,  
My saul langs to be free, John,  
And angels beekon me  
    To the land o' the leal.

Oh ! hand ye leal and true, John,  
Your day is wearin' through, John,  
And I'll welcome you  
    To the land o' the leal.  
Now fare ye weel my ain John,  
This world's cares are vain, John,  
We'll meet, and we'll be fain  
    In the land o' the leal.

Lines like these require no comment at our hands. They speak for themselves, and to many who have undergone the sad ordeal of parting with a little one through death, the second verse must always appeal to their hearts with a feeling that is almost sacred. "The Land o' the Leal" is at once the finest of all Lady Nairne's productions, and as such has been recognised and sung in all parts of the civilised world. Turning, however, from the serious to the comic side of human nature, how graphically does she portray to us the amusing story of the Land o' Cockpen, a worthy gentleman, who, at rather an advanced period in existence, arrives at the conclusion that he requires a wife,

“ his braw house to keep ; ” and having settled the fact to his entire satisfaction, his choice settles on a certain lady whose age corresponds with his own, and who was known by the dignified title of “ Mistress Jean.” He therefore resolves to at once impart his conclusions to the lady in question ; and, having equipped himself with a sword and a cocked hat, he mounts his grey mare to make his appearance more imposing, and sets forth, never dreaming that the conclusions of Mistress Jean might not exactly coincide with his own. Oh ! no ; the very idea to him would have seemed ridiculous ; he was the Laird o’ Cockpen, while she was only

A penniless lass wi’ a lang pedigree.

In due time he arrives at the gate of the mansion wherein the lady resides, and at once commands the servant to

Tell Mistress Jean to come speedily ben  
She’s wanted to speak to the Laird o’ Cockpen.

And who cannot but enjoy the discomfiture and astonishment of the worthy laird at the result of the interview, and the wonderful courage he exhibits when all is over :

When she cam’ ben he bowed fu’ low,  
And what was his errand he soon let her know ;  
Amazed was the laird when the lady said “ Na,”  
And wi’ a laigh courtsie she turned awa’.

Dumfoundered was he, but nae sigh did he gie,  
He mounted his mare, and rode cannilie ;  
And aften he thought, as he gaed through the glen,  
She's daft to refuse the Laird o' Cockpen !

And while Lady Nairne did not add the concluding stanza to the song as it is now sung, yet we are all pleased to learn that the Laird was ultimately successful :

Next time that the laird and the lady was seen  
They were gaun arm in arm to the kirk on the green.

Lady Nairne deserves special notice for her many noble contributions to the Jacobite songs of Scotland. Such songs as "Wha'll be King but Charlie?" "He's owre the hills that I l'oe weel," "There grows a bounie brier bush in our kailyard," "Wi' a hundred pipers an' a' an' a'," "Charlie is my darling," and "Will ye no come back again?" are among the finest and most popular of our national songs. She was intensely imbued with her father's patriotic spirit, and held the principles and deeds of Prince Charlie in great veneration.

English brides were a' in vain,  
Tho' puir and puirer we maun be ;  
Siller canna buy the heart  
That beats aye for thine and thee.

We watch'd thee in the mornin' hour,  
We watch'd thee in the morning grey ;  
Though thirty thousand pounds they gie,  
Oh there's nane that wad betray !

Sweet's the laverock's note, and lang,  
 Liltin' wildly up the glen ;  
 But aye tae me he sings ae sang—  
 Will ye no come back again ?

Will ye no come back again ?  
 Will ye no come back again ?  
 Better lo'ed ye canna be—  
 Will ye no come back again ?

Another excellent and popular song is “ Caller Herrin’,” which describes the various thoughts that agitate the hearts of the fishermen's wives while their husbands are engaged in their perilous occupations on the deep :—

“ Wha'll buy my caller herrin' ? ”  
 Ye may ca' them vulgar fairin',  
 Wives and mithers, maist despairin',  
 Ca' them lives o' men !

The rest of her songs are each and all worthy of notice, and will repay the time spent in reading and studying them. They include, besides those which I have mentioned :—

“ Farewell Edinburgh, where happy I hae been.”  
 “ The Lass o' Gowrie.”  
 “ Would you be young again ? ”  
 “ The Twa Doos.”  
 “ He's a terrible man, John Todd, John Todd.”  
 “ The Fife Laird.”  
 “ When ye gang awa', Jamie.”



“ Kind Robin lo’es me.”

“ Rest is not here.”

“ Jamie, the Laird.”

“ Gude nicht and joy be wi’ ye a’.”

“ Here’s to them that are gane ! ”

And many others which I need not refer to.

Lady Nairne was married to her cousin, Captain W. N. Nairne, in 1806, and had one child, a son. Her husband died in 1830 and her son in 1837. After this she resided on the Continent, until failing health compelled her to forego the fatigues of travel and return to Gask. Here she gradually became very frail, and on Sunday, October 26th, 1845, passed peacefully away to the “ Land o’ the Leal,” in the seventy-ninth year of her age. A few months after her death, Dr. Chalmers, in an address delivered at Edinburgh in relation to certain religious and educational work then being carried on in the West Port of that city, said :—

“ Let me speak now as to the countenance we have received. I am now at liberty to mention a very noble benefaction which I received about a year ago. Inquiry was made at me by a lady, mentioning that she had a sum at her disposal, and that she wished to apply it to charitable purposes ; and she wanted me to enumerate a list of charitable objects, in proportion to the estimate I had of their value. Accordingly, I furnished her

with a list of about five or six charitable objects. The highest in the scale were those institutions which had for their design the christianising of the people at home; and I also mentioned to her, in connection, what we were doing at the West Port; and there came to me from her, in the course of a day or two, no less a sum than £300. She is now dead; she is now in her grave, and her works do follow her. When she gave me this noble benefaction, she laid me under strict injunctions of secrecy, and, accordingly, I did not mention her name to any person; but after she was dead, I begged of her nearest heir that I might be allowed to proclaim it, because I thought that her example, so worthy to be followed, might influence others in imitating her; and I am happy to say that I am now at liberty to state that it was Lady Nairne of Perthshire. It enabled us at the expense of £330, to purchase sites for schools, and a church; and we have got a site in the very heart of the locality, with a very considerable extent of ground for a washing green, a washing-house, and a play-ground for the children." This, however, is but one of the many benevolent acts recorded of Lady Nairne. She left considerable sums of money to be used in extending the usefulness of various institutions, and it will be a long time before the good name and charitable acts of

Lady Nairne, the "Flower of Strathearn," are forgotten in Scotland.

A writer in the *Strathearn Herald*, who recently stood beside her grave says:—"When I mention Gask House, it will be at once known that the chief attraction for the visitor lies in its connection with Lady Nairne, the authoress of "The Auld Hoose" and many other of our favourite Scotch songs. When I entered the grounds at Gask I was fortunate in getting the kindly-proffered aid of the land-steward, Mr. Chalmers, in shewing me all round. He first took me along the Roman road, which is at this point open for some miles north and south, then showed me two Roman outposts, small circular raised bits of ground with ditches surrounding them, similar to what are here and there to be found in the neighbourhood. We then passed the modern mansion of Gask, a pretentious building with some claims of architectural beauty; and quite near to this my guide led me unexpectedly to the ruins of the "auld hoose" of the song. The shell only of the front wall of this ancient dwelling remains, but that is guarded carefully for the sake of the melodious references to its history. Above the doorway and on several other inscribed stones are the dates 1626 and 1662, with the family coat of arms, three crescents, popularly in the locality called horseshoes.

Stretched along the front wall of the house is the old pear tree, quite dead, yet carefully preserved in its fruitless and leafless old age, and suggestive of the time when the "bairnies fu o' glee" of the house itself looked so eagerly forward to its annual fruit ripening.

The old parish church of Gask at one time stood near the "auld hoose," but it has been removed, and in its stead a private chapel has been erected by the Oliphant family. Within this new chapel lies the body of Lady Nairne, and around it are the ancient parish tombstones, in "the kirkyard" of the song, the oldest date on any that I saw being 1741. Within a stone's throw, and in sight of her birth-place, as well as of her place of burial, is a monumental cross erected this year (1889) by the present proprietor to "Carolina Oliphant, Baroness Nairn, born at Gask 1766, died at Gask 1845." The legend, "Carmina morte carent" (her song shall never die), with the representation of a lyre and the family crest, also are inscribed on the monument. The old garden sun-dial, that "tauld how time did pass," was not long ago dug out of the garden where it had for many years been interred, and it now stands very much in the position it long ago held, the garden itself being now laid out in grass walks that are pleasant to tread upon. The grounds are most pleasantly situated

on the rising slopes above the river Earn, much attention being given by the present laird to the timber on the estate, which has some splendid specimens of Spanish chestnut amongst its other riches—one we measured being  $16\frac{1}{2}$  feet in circumference a few feet above the ground. Much pleasure may be derived from a visit to this old house, as even apart from the sentimental associations, the place is one of rare beauty, and the owners are amongst the oldest of our Scottish families.

The late Rev. Dr. Charles Rogers in his memoir of Lady Nairne in the *Scottish Minstrel*, says:—“After her ladyship’s death, it occurred to her relatives that, as there could no longer be any reason for retaining her *incognita*, full justice should be done to her memory by the publication of a collected edition of her songs. This scheme was partially executed in an elegant folio, entitled *Lays from Strathearn*, by Carolina Baroness Nairne. Arranged with symphonies and accompaniments for the pianoforte, by Finlay Dun. In 1868, the editor of the present work undertook, chiefly at the solicitation of the excellent gentlewoman to whom Lady Nairne had entrusted the secret of her authorship, to edit the whole of her lyrical compositions along with a memoir of her life. In the execution of his task, he was privileged to re-

ceive the cordial assistance of Lady Nairne's relatives, who, by an examination of the family correspondence and otherwise, afforded him material assistance in the accomplishment of his object. *The Life and Songs of the Baroness Nairne*, published by Messrs. Charles Griffin & Co., at once passed into a second edition, and has excited much interest among the lovers of Scottish minstrelsy both at home and abroad."

## THE WATER MILL.

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IT is somewhat singular that the authorship of this melodious and justly celebrated poem is still a subject of dispute, and all lovers of poetical literature must regret that two versions of so valuable a production are now standing before the world, both of them surrounded with charges of plagiarism, but with very grave doubts as to which of the two is really the original. Such however is the case. Two persons at different times have asserted their right to the authorship of the poem, and while each of these has given us a slightly different version of it still the similarity of sentiment, tone and thought embodied in almost every line of both versions leaves little or no doubt in the mind of the reader but that the one is simply a copy of the other. In America the poem is generally attributed to the late Major-General D. C. McCallum of Rochester, N.Y., while in Great Britain the honour is invariably awarded to Miss Sarah Doudney, authoress of *Psalms of Life*, a work of considerable merit, and which is now in its second edition. General McCallum printed his version under the title of

“The Water Mill,” in the little volume of poems which he issued in 1870, and in 1871 Miss Doudney printed her version under the title of “The Lessons of the Water Mill,” in the first edition of her *Psalms of Life*. We append the two versions herewith so that our readers may note how alike they are to each other in all particulars.

### THE LESSON OF THE WATERMILL.

BY MISS DOUDNEY.

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“But this I say, brethren, the time is short.”

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Listen to the watermill  
 Through the livelong day,  
 How the clicking of its wheel  
 Wears the hours away !  
 Languidly the autumn wind  
 Stirs the forest leaves ;  
 From the fields the reapers sing  
 Binding up the sheaves ;  
 And a proverb haunts my mind  
 As a spell is cast :  
 “The mill cannot grind  
 With the water that is past.”

Autumn winds revive no more  
 Leaves that once are shed,  
 And the sickle cannot reap  
 Corn once gathered :  
 Flows the ruffled streamlet on,  
 Tranquil, deep, and still,  
 Never gliding back again  
 To the watermill ;



Truly speaks that proverb old,  
With a meaning vast—  
“The mill cannot grind  
With the water that is past.”

Take the lesson to thyself,  
True and loving heart ;  
Golden youth is fleeting by,  
Summer hours depart ;  
Learn to make the most of life,  
Lose no happy day,  
Time will never bring thee back  
Chances swept away ;  
Leave no tender word unsaid,  
Love while love shall last ;  
“The mill cannot grind  
With the water that is past.”

Work while yet the daylight shines,  
Man of strength and will !  
Never does the streamlet glide  
Useless by the mill ;  
Wait not till to-morrow's sun  
Beams upon thy way,  
All that thou canst call thine own  
Lies in thy “to-day ;”  
Power and intellect and health  
May not always last ;  
“The mill cannot grind  
With the water that is past.’

Oh, the wasted hours of life  
That have drifted by !  
Oh, the good *that might have been*—  
Lost without a sigh !  
Love that we might once have saved  
By a single word,

Thoughts conceived but never penned  
 Perishing unheard ;  
 Take the proverb to thine heart,  
 Take and hold it fast :  
 “ The mill cannot grind  
 With the water that is past.”

### THE WATERMILL.

BY GENERAL M'CALLUM.

Oh listen to the watermill, through all the livelong day,  
 As the clicking of the wheel wears hour by hour away ;  
 How languidly the autumn wind doth stir the withered leaves,  
 As on the field the reapers sing while binding up the sheaves,  
 A solemn proverb strikes my mind, and, as a spell, is cast—  
 “ The mill will never grind again with water that is past.”

Soft summer winds revive no more leaves strewn o'er earth and  
 main ;  
 The sickle never more will reap the yellow-garnered grain ;  
 The rippling stream flows ever on, aye tranquil, deep and still,  
 But never glideth back again to busy watermill.  
 The solemn proverb speaks to all, with meaning deep and vast,  
 “ The mill will never grind again with water that is past.”

Oh ! clasp the proverb to thy soul, dear loving heart and true,  
 For golden years are fleeting by, and youth is passing too,  
 And, learn to make the most of life, nor lose one happy day ;  
 For time will ne'er return sweet joys, neglected—thrown away ;  
 Nor leave one tender word unsaid, thy kindness sow broadcast—  
 “ The mill will never grind again with water that is past.”

Oh ! the wasted hours of life that have swiftly drifted by ;  
 Alas ! the good we might have done, all gone without a sigh.  
 Love that we might once have saved by a single kindly word—

Thoughts conceived but ne'er expressed, perishing unpenned,  
unheard,

Oh ! take the lesson to thy soul, forever clasp it fast,  
"The mill will never grind again with water that is past."

Work on while yet the sun doth shine, thou man of strength and  
will,

The streamlet ne'er doth useless glide by clicking watermill ;  
Nor wait until to-morrow's light beams brightly on thy way,  
For all that thou can'st call thine own lies in the phrase "to-  
day."

Possessions, power, and blooming health, must all be lost at  
last,

"The mill will never grind again with water that is past."

Oh ! love thy God and fellowman—this comprehendeth all  
High Heaven's universal plan. Here let us prostrate fall ;  
The wise, the ignorant may read this simple lesson taught,  
All mystery or abstruse creed compared therewith are naught.  
Oh ! brothers on ! in deeds of love, for life is fleeting fast,  
"The mill will never grind again with water that is past."

With which of the two versions is best we have nothing to do at present ; what we desire to find out is which of the two is the original one, and it appears impossible to decide this question by a mere perusal of both versions. General McCallum was the very soul of honour in all things, and it seems incredible to his friends that he would claim the authorship of the poem if he really had no right to it. We may state that a manuscript copy with various alterations and notes was found among his papers after

his death, but this in itself would not prove conclusively that he was the author of it, especially when there was another claimant in the field for the same honour. We may also remark in passing that the fact that none of the general's other productions equal "The Water Mill" does not prove that he did not compose the latter piece. A correspondent in Scotland, who has no doubt in regard to the authorship, relates among other items how the subject of the poem first presented itself to the general. He says: "I knew General McCallum when a boy, before he left this country, and when he revisited Scotland, about sixteen years ago, had the pleasure of spending an evening with him and renewing our early acquaintanceship. During the evening the general recited several of his productions, amongst them 'The Water Mill,' and related the circumstances which led to its inspiration.

"It was during the civil war in America. He was on the move, accompanying President Lincoln, when the train in which they were journeying arrived at a river crossed by a swing bridge. Having to wait a little, for the bridge being closed, he alighted from the train. He had passed lately through scenes that had depressed him both mentally and physically, and, as he stood there, musing on the ever-flowing river and a water mill near by,

the spirit of the poem entered his mind. He took the earliest opportunity of putting the impressions formed into words, and the result was 'The Water Mill.' "

From what I know personally of General McCallum, and from mutual friends in America, I have no hesitation in maintaining he was the author of the original poem.

Now in regard to Miss Doudney's claim: she says that she wrote the verses when a girl and that they appeared with her name attached in one of the issues of the *Churchman's Family Magazine*, a publication which has long since passed out of existence. Could the particular number of this magazine be found with the poem in it as stated, that of course would end all controversy on the subject. Mr. Robert Ford, the distinguished Scottish author, relates the following interesting circumstances in connection with the poem after it had been set to music:

"First it attracted attention as a recitation, and was recited by public elocutionists over the length and breadth of the land. Then as a song, with music by the late Washington Irving Bishop, the celebrated thought-reader, it rang through the States, and by and by took wing over the sea, and landed in Britain. Messrs. Moore and Burgess, of the well-known troupe, who hold forth perma-

nently in London, wrote to Mr. Bishop for his permission to sing the song in England, and their request was granted. The minstrels' nightly use of it for a time sent the song ringing through the London streets, and several English music-publishers at once issued it in sheet form, which, under the existing copyright laws, they could not of course be debarred from doing.

“One day, when in London, W. Irving Bishop was looking over some second-hand volumes in a shop in the Strand, when he noticed in a little book of poems a set of verses under the title of ‘The Lesson of the Water Mill,’ which, on reading, he discovered were nearly the same as the American version, which, to his chagrin, had been so freely pirated on this side of the Atlantic. Approaching the publisher of this volume, he inquired about the author, and was referred to Miss Sarah Doudney, journalist, Hants. Miss Doudney offered to sell him the copyright of the song for ten guineas.

“‘All right,’ said Bishop, ‘I will send you a check to-morrow.’

“But when the morrow came the publishers told the thought-reader that they had considered the matter, and Miss Doudney could not sell the copyright. They kept thinking apparently that there might be something in it, so they set their

wits to work, as 'Luke Sharpe' informed the readers of the *Detroit Free Press* some time ago, and soon found that 'The Water Mill' was published as a song by half a dozen music firms; so proceedings were at once commenced against the firms aforesaid, and they each had to pay a substantial fine, with law costs, and a percentage on every sheet sold.

"Of all this, however, the authoress got nothing, and Mr. Bishop, with true American pertinacity, did not let the matter drop here. He studied up the law of copyright and found that the author had two rights to dispose of—one the right to publish in a book, and the other the right of public representation. He found that Miss Doudney had only sold the right to her publishers to publish in book form, so he at once purchased from her the right of reciting or singing the verses in public. This done, he revisited the publishers, under the shadow of St. Paul's.

"'Gentlemen,' he said, 'I own the right to recite or sing these verses. If any one sings or recites them from your book, or the music, I can recover twenty-five dollars from him or her. This will greatly damage the sale of your music and your book, a new edition of which has just been published. Gentlemen, do you see the advisability of compromising?'

“They did, and accordingly the matter was compromised, the arrangement being that from every sheet of music sold so much should go to the publishers, so much to the composer, and so much to the authoress.

“All this of course proves that Miss Doudney never hesitated in claiming the poem as her individual property, but we must not overlook the fact that General McCallum at various times also made the same claim. Both parties, as we have already pointed out, published the poem, or at least a version of it, under their own signature, yet one of these must have known that their work was a piece of plagiarism. Now to which of them does the credit of authorship really belong? The question is certainly worthy of attention, and should be decided without delay.



## THE POET FERGUSSON.

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WALKING leisurely up Broadway, New York, one sunny afternoon lately, I stopped at a certain book-shop and began examining a lot of books which were arranged on a table standing at the door. There was a goodly number of them, and directly in front of me, painted in large black letters, was the kindly invitation to "Pick them out, only twenty-five cents each." Now, I am a great lover of all kinds of books, and I am also a staunch advocate of cheap literature for the people; and yet, I confess that instead of a feeling of gladness coming over me, I experienced a deep twinge of regret when I saw such works as D'Israeli's *Curiosities of Literature*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *The Ingoldsby Legends*, *Sartor Resartus*, *Goethe's Poems*, *Goldsmith's Essays*, *Bon Gaultier Ballads*, and many other equally well-known and standard works begging to be bought for twenty-five cents each. Had they been soiled or torn second-hand copies I would have considered them cheap enough at the price, but these were new and daintily bound copies, and what astonished me more, upon a

closer inspection I found from their title pages that they claimed to be "complete and unabridged." Truly there is no excuse nowadays for a corner in each home not being well stocked with a liberal supply of good and wholesome literature.

Leaving my new friends standing in all their glory, I passed round to the other side of the table and began an inspection of a number of genuine relics of by-gone days that I found there. Here were Baxter's *Saints' Rest* and Buchan's *Domestic Medicine*, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and *Æsop's Fables*, Washington Irving's *Sketch Book*, Scott's *Ivanhoe*, Crabbe's *Poems* and Miss Edgeworth's *Dramas*, Shakespeare, Milton, Pope and Byron, besides Bibles, prayer-books, hymnals and other religious books for all denominations and tastes. But there was one little 12mo, with a dirty paper back and marble sides, which somehow excited my curiosity, and I took it up and, opening it at the title-page, read: *Poems on Various Subjects*, by Robert Fergusson. In two parts. Edinburgh, printed by T. Ruddiman & Co., 1785." Scottish poetry has always possessed special charms for me, and I have a very sincere veneration for Fergusson. I already possessed three different editions of his poems, but here was a kind of prize for me; one of the earliest editions, uncut and in the best possible state of preservation, price twenty-

five cents! Needless to say the book immediately became my property.

I took a seat and began to scan the pages. The prefatory or rather biographical note was very brief, occupying less than two leaves. What had they to say about Fergusson in those days? I read: "The author of these poems lives now only in the literary world. We would not present them to the public, did we not think the perusal would give pleasure. Some short account of the life of this juvenile writer, will not, we hope, be deemed unnecessary: for every one wishes to know the character of a man whose productions they admire. Robert Fergusson, with whom Scottish poetry now sleeps, was born at Edinburgh, September 5, 1751." One moment, please. Let me read the beginning of this sentence again: "Robert Fergusson, with whom Scottish poetry *now sleeps*." Let me see. This book was printed in 1785, say in the autumn—the year before Robert Burns first visited Edinburgh and electrified its learned and literary circles with the greatness of his genius. Had no rumour of the remarkable poetical productions of the Ayrshire ploughman yet reached the writer of the words which had arrested my attention? Had no kind friend whispered to him of the existence of such poems as "The Death of poor Malie," the "Epistle to John Rankine," "The

'Twa Herds," "The Jolly Beggars," "Hallowe'en," "The Cotter's Saturday Night," "To a Mouse," "Man was made to Mourn," or even "Holy Willie's Prayer," all of which were composed during or previous to 1785? Let us be charitable and conclude that he had not heard of these things. Let us give him credit for the assertion that he made and believed that he made it in all sincerity and with a sad conviction that the chords of the Scottish Harp had been rent asunder for ever when the sod in the old Canongate churchyard of Edinburgh enfolded in its embrace the mortal remains of Robert Fergusson.

"When our poet became of an age susceptible of education," continued our preface, "he was taught its rudiments. After having acquired a proper knowledge of English he was put to the high school, where he made a quick progress in the Latin language. The father of our poet intended him for the church; and having by the interest of his friends and the young gentleman's merit, procured him a bursary, he was sent to the University of St. Andrews. Though never overstudious, he soon attained to a proficiency in several sciences. His knowledge of mathematics was such that he procured the approbation, friendship and patronage of Dr. Wilkie, then a professor of that branch of education. In the second Scot-

tish Eclogue, the doctor's death is most beautifully and pathetically regretted. Having finished his studies at the University of St. Andrews he returned to Edinburgh. His father died soon after and with him the plan for the education of his son. Our author then attempted the study of the law—a study the most improper for him, and in which he made little or no progress; for a genius so lively could not submit to the drudgery of that dry and sedentary profession.

“To attempt a character of the works of this youthful bard would be equally vain as difficult. No colours but his own could paint it to the life; and who in his line of composition can ever draw the sketch? His talent for versification in the Scots' dialect has been exceeded by none—equalled by few. The subjects he chose were generally uncommon, often temporary. His images and sentiments which he had a knack in clothing with the most agreeable and natural expression, were lively and striking. Had he enjoyed life and health to a mature age, it is probable he would have revived our ancient Caledonian poetry, of late so much neglected and despised. His works are lasting monuments of his genius and vivacity. For social life he possessed an amazing variety of qualifications. With the best good nature, with much modesty, and the greatest goodness of heart

he was always sprightly, always entertaining. His powers of song were very great in a double capacity. When seated with some select companions over a bowl his wit flashed like lightning, struck his hearers irresistibly and set the table in a roar.

“But alas! the engaging, nay, bewitching qualities proved fatal to their owner, and shortened the period of his rational existence. Yet he found favour in the sight of Providence, who was pleased to call him from a miserable state of being to a life of early immortality on the sixteenth of October, 1774. Thus died Robert Fergusson, regretted by his friends, and lamented by the lovers of poetry, of wit, and of song.”

Peace to the dust of him who composed the above eulogy to the memory of Robert Fergusson, and all honour to the generosity of Robert Burns, who, with feelings of reverence and gratitude, erected a tombstone over the last resting place of him whom he extolled as:

“My elder brother in misfortune,  
By far my elder brother in the muses.”

## ROBIN ADAIR.



What's this dull town to me ?  
Robin's not here ;  
What was't I wish'd to see ?  
What wish'd to hear ?  
Where's all the joy and mirth,  
Made this town a heaven on earth ?  
Oh ! they're all fled with thee,  
Robin Adair.

What made th' assembly shine ?  
Robin Adair ;  
What made the ball so fine ?  
Robin was there.  
What when the play was o'er,  
What made my heart so sore ?  
Oh ! it was parting with  
Robin Adair.

But now thou'rt cold to me,  
Robin Adair.  
Yet I'll be true to thee,  
Robin Adair,  
And him I loved so well,  
Still in my heart shall dwell,  
Oh ! I can ne'er forget  
Robin Adair,

Few songs or ballads have achieved a wider popularity than that gained by this simple and pathetic little gem. Indeed we may safely assert that it has been sung and welcomed in almost every portion of the civilized world, and it is still a general favourite with all lovers of lyrical poetry. Nor is this to be wondered at. There is a simplicity, quaintness and delicacy not only in the words, but also in the air, which fascinates our feelings and makes the song linger in our memories long after we have enjoyed the rare pleasure of listening to some fair singer warbling it forth in all its exquisiteness. "It is impossible," says Mr. Colin Brown, "to conceive how any combination of nine separate measures of music of three tones each, or only thirty-four notes in all, could be more replete with the very soul of melody. It belongs to a class of gems which bears the impress of remote antiquity. Few of such peerless beauty can be found in music, so simple in construction, and so full of power and pathos." Most people imagine that Robin Adair is a Scottish song, but this is an error. Properly classed it is an Irish song, the subject of the original version (the one quoted above) being an Irishman. There is also a history attached to the song which is not only peculiar but interesting, and as many of our readers are not acquainted with the circumstances that



called this well-known lyric into existence, we quote the facts herewith as related by the eminent litterateur, Mr. J. Cuthbert Hadden. He says : “ Nearly a century and a half ago there was living in Dublin an impulsive young Irishman, named Robin Adair. He was studying for the medical profession, and, like not a few of his genus in the present day, he had got into some scrape which obliged him to quit the city. Arriving at Holyhead, he found that his purse was not equal to a journey by coach to London, whither he had resolved to go, so he manfully set out to walk to the metropolis. The roads of those days were anything but pleasant for travelling, and Adair had not proceeded far on his way when he came upon a carriage that had been overturned. The occupant of the vehicle proved to be a well known lady of fashion, and we read that besides being greatly alarmed at the accident, she had received some slight personal injury. ‘ Adair, like a true Irishman ’—so the story goes—‘ at once offered his services, and in a very short space of time had the carriage righted and the lady attended to. Adair was a really handsome and aristocratic-looking young fellow, notwithstanding that his dress might have been of finer texture and in better condition ; and, with ready frankness, he soon explained that he was a practiced surgeon, and begged permission

to examine the extent of the discomfited lady's injuries. An examination soon showed that they were of merely a trifling order—that, in short, the nerves were more upset than the body hurt. At the time of the accident the lady was journeying towards the metropolis, and learning that her benefactor was travelling thither, she naturally invited him to take a seat in her carriage. Arriving in London, she showed her gratitude by presenting the young Irishman with a cheque for a 100 guineas, at the same time inviting him to visit her at her home as often as he pleased.'

"With the money thus placed at his disposal Adair now began to study hard, and the result in the end was that, with the help of his patroness, he soon acquired a good connection. Being an excellent dancer as well as a brilliant conversationalist, he was frequently invited to dances given by the lady, and one night Lady Caroline Keppel, the second daughter of the Earl of Albemarle, was his partner. 'It was a case of love at first sight,' says the chronicler whose narrative we are following, 'and Lady Caroline's attachment was as sincere as it was sudden; they were the observed of all the guests, and her relatives were in despair. The couple met again and again, and their affection soon ripened into an intense passion. The lady's kinsmen were stupefied with amazement.

Were they to allow an unknown Irishman to carry off the flower of their flock, the beautiful Caroline? They set their wits to work to try and persuade her to give him up. But all in vain. Handsome heirs of the oldest families were prevailed upon to woo her, but she would not listen to them. She was sent abroad to see if travel would alter her determination, but without avail, and she gradually began to fall ill.' When she was at Bath, whither she had gone for the benefit of her health, she wrote the verses now so well known—verses which have a new meaning to us when we know the story of their composition :

What's this dull town to me?

Robin's not near.

“At last the separation from Adair and the continual nagging of her relatives caused the lady to become so dangerously ill that, upon the doctors despairing of her life, the union was reluctantly consented to. In the *Grand Magazine of Universal Intelligence* the event was chronicled thus: ‘February 22, 1758, Robert Adair, Esq., to the Right Honourable the Lady Caroline Keppel.’

“A few days after the marriage Adair was made inspector-general of military hospitals, and the king being taken with his pleasant manner and knowing his undoubted ability appointed him

king's sergeant surgeon and surgeon of Chelsea Hospital. Lady Caroline died after giving birth to her third child. Knowing how devotedly her husband was attached to her, she firmly believed he would not marry again, and she was right. Except on state occasions, when he was obliged to appear in court costume, he continued to wear mourning for his wife until his death, which took place, we believe, in 1790. The only son of the union, the Right Honourable Sir Robert Adair, died in 1855."

The following version of Robin Adair is to be found in various Scottish song-books, and it is doubtless from seeing this version in such works that the idea of the song being a purely Scottish one originated. The present version is by Mr. Robert D. Jamieson, and is credited by many people with being greatly superior to the original.

Art thou for ever gane,  
Robin Adair ?  
While I am left alane,  
Robin Adair.  
Can I believe thou art  
Torn from my aching heart ;  
How can I bide the smart,  
Robin Adair ?

Still is thy bosom now,  
Robin Adair ;  
Cauld is thy manly brow,  
Robin Adair.

Wintry this world to me,  
Pleasure it canna gie—  
I am bereft o' thee,  
Robin Adair.

But true love canna dee,  
Robin Adair.  
Sweet thocht to comfort me,  
Robin Adair.  
Soon shall we meet again,  
Where joys that never wane  
Shall banish ilka pain,  
Robin Adair.

There are other versions of the song known to exist, but none of them are worthy of being quoted or even referred to.

## THE MOTHER OF ROBERT BURNS.

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WE are all more or less interested in the lives of the mothers of great men. Indeed, the subject invariably possesses a peculiar charm for us, and we love to spend an occasional hour listening to reminiscences of them, or to read about them, or to think about them, and certainly we cannot but honour and admire them for the great minds which have been given to the world through them. And yet, in most instances, these lives have been quiet and uneventful ones. The chief characteristic in them has generally been the adornment of the home circle. They have proved themselves worthy helpmates to their husbands in adversity, as well as in prosperity; they have brought their children up carefully and in a knowledge of God; their lives have been prolonged to a ripe old age, and at last they have passed quietly away, leaving behind them a sweetly cherished memory and the fragrance of a pure and well spent life. Such in fact is the record of the lives of many of these noble women, and such was the life of Agnes

Brown, wife of William Burness, and mother of "Scotland's darling poet"—Robert Burns.

Agnes Brown was born at Craigenton, in the parish of Carrick, on the seventeenth of March, 1732. Her father rented and cultivated a small farm in the district, and is credited with being a frugal and industrious farmer. Her mother died when Agnes was only nine years of age, and the care of four younger children for long afterwards devolved upon her. Up to this time her education had been of the most meagre description. She had been taught by a woman in the village to read a few words of the Bible, and to repeat a few verses of the psalms, and this constituted all the education that she ever received.

While we can readily understand the reason, it seems hard for us at this day to realize that the mother of Robert Burns was unable to write even her own name. She became acquainted with William Burness (for so the poet's father spelt his name), at one of the annual fairs held at Maybole, and the acquaintance thus formed gradually ripened into love, and they were married on the 15th of December, 1757. Robert was their first born. Robert Chambers says of her at this time: "She had a fine complexion, with pale red hair and beautiful dark eyes. She was of a neat, small figure, extremely active and industrious, naturally

cheerful, but in later life possessed by anxieties, no doubt a consequence of the life of hardships and difficulties through which it has been her lot to pass. She sung very well, and had a never-failing store of old ballads and songs, on which her poetical son must have fed in boyhood."

As a trait of the life of Mrs. Burness in the days of sadness which preceded her husband's death, Mrs. Begg (the poet's sister), remembers the old man coming in one day from sowing, very weary. He had used all the thrashed-up grain, and was now desirous of preparing some for dinner for the horses; but his worthy helpmate, on seeing his fatigued state, insisted that he should refresh himself by a rest, while she herself would see that the beasts were duly cared for. The heroic little woman then went to the barn with her servant Lizzy Paton, and the two soon had the necessary corn for the horses both thrashed and winnowed. Such was the household of the youthful Burns. Who can but regret that the lot of such a family was not from the first a kindlier one! Everyone in any way familiar with the poet's life will readily recall the hard struggle with poverty which his father had after his marriage, and which only terminated for him with his death in 1784.

The wife bravely shared his hardships, and never ceased to think him the wisest and best of



men. John Murdoch, the poet's teacher, tells us that while visiting the Burns household: "The father and son sat down with us when we enjoyed a conversation, wherein solid reasoning, sensible remarks and a moderate seasoning of jocularity were so nicely blended as to render it palatable to all parties. . . . Mrs. Burness, too, was of the party as much as possible :

But still the house affairs would draw her thence,  
Which ever as she could with haste despatch,  
She'd come again, and with a greedy ear  
Devour up their discourse,

and particularly that of her husband. At all times, and in all companies she listened to him with a more marked attention than to anybody else. When under the necessity of being absent while he was speaking, she seemed to regret, as a real loss, that she had missed what the good man had said. This worthy woman, Agnes Brown, had the most thorough esteem for her husband of any woman I ever knew."

Mrs. Burness lived to see her son's genius acknowledged by the world, and to share in the honour and renown which it brought to the family. She died on the fourteenth of January, 1820, aged eighty-eight years, and was buried in Bolton church-yard, near Haddington. "Here," says a writer in *The Haddingtonshire Courier*, "lies in-

tered all that is mortal of the honoured mother of our national poet. Gilbert Burns, the eldest son of the family, when factor to Lord Blantyre, resided at Grant's Braes, his aged mother living with him; and at her death she was interred in the churchyard. One after another of Gilbert's family followed or preceded their grandmother to the grave, till five of the younger generation, all taken away in the bloom of life, lay beside her along with a daughter, the younger sister of the poet. To mark the spot, Gilbert erected a neat headstone, on which are inscribed the names of those who lie beneath. In due time his own was added to the rest, and the warm-hearted but sagacious elder brother of Burns now sleeps quietly with his kindred in the churchyard of Bolton, far away from the pleasant murmuring of the Doon, with which he was familiar in the days of his youth. The burying place of the Burns family is now surrounded by a chaste but substantial iron-railing. The headstone and railing have been repainted, the grass within the enclosure and around it is tidily trimmed and everything done which could denote that the dead were not forgotten by the living. The survivors of Burns are not unmindful of the place which Agnes Brown holds in the affectionate regard of Scotsmen. But for her the "Cottar's Saturday Night" might never have been

written; and it cannot be uninteresting to the dwellers in East Lothian to know that her remains lie buried in one of the quietest and most peaceful of our country churchyards, where the trees which cast their morning shadows over the graves are reflected in the sweet waters of the Coalston streamlet as it flows eastward to the Tyne." The following appropriate poem to her memory is from the pen of Mr. John Russell:

AGNES BROWN.

The spring birds sing, nor care if no one listen,  
The spring flowers open if the sun but shine,  
The spring winds wander where the green buds glisten  
Through all the vale of Tyne.

And while, to music of the spring's returning,  
Thy fair stream, Gifford, in the sunlight flows,  
I, nursing tender thoughts, this sweet March morning,  
Stand where the dead repose.

The snow-drop on the grass-green turf is blowing,  
Its pure white chalice to the cold earth hung;  
The crocus with its heart of fire is glowing  
As when old Homer sung.

And round me are the quaint-hewn gravestones, giving,  
With emblems rude, by generations read,  
Their simple words of warning for the living,  
Of promise for the dead.

But not that mausoleum, huge and hoary,  
With elegiac marble, telling how

Its long-forgotten great ones died in glory,  
Has drawn me hither now.

Ah, no ! with reverence meet from these I turn :  
They have what wealth could bring or love supply,  
Like thousands such, who, born as they were born,  
Live, have their day, and die.

Let peace be theirs ! It is a fairer meed,  
A more enduring halo of renown,  
That glorifies this grave, o'er which I read  
The name of Agnes Brown.

A peasant name, befitting peasant tongue :  
How lives it longer than an autumn noon ?  
'Twas hers, the mother of the bard who sung  
The banks and braes of Doon.

Here in this alien ground her ashes lie,  
Far from her native haunts on Carrick shore,  
Far from where first she felt a mother's joy  
O'er the brave child she bore.

Ah, who can tell the thoughts that on her prest,  
As o'er his cradle-bed she bent in bliss,  
Or gave from the sweet fountains of her breast  
The life that nourished his.

Perhaps in prescient vision came to her  
Some shadowings of the glory yet afar—  
Of that fierce storm, whence rose, serene and clear,  
His never-setting star.

But dreamt she ever, as she sang to still  
His infant heart in slumber sweet and long,  
That he who silent lay the while, should fill  
Half the round world with song ?

Yet so he filled it ; and she lived to see  
The singer, chapleted with laurel, stand,  
Upon his lips that wondrous melody  
Which thrilled his native land.

She saw, too, when had passed the singer's breath,  
A nation's proud heart throbbing at his name,  
Forgetting, in the pitying light of death,  
Whatever was of blame.

Oh, may we hope she heard not, even afar,  
The screamings of that vulture-brood who tear  
The heart from out the dead, and meanly mar  
The fame they may not share !

Who would not wish that her long day's decline  
Had peacefullest setting, unsuffused with tears,  
Who bore to Scotland him, our Bard divine,  
Immortal as the years ?

He sleeps among the eternal ; nothing mars  
His rest, nor ever pang to him returns ;  
Write, too, her epitaph among the stars,  
Mother of Robert Burns.

Mrs. Begg described her mother as "about the ordinary height ; a well-made, *sonsie* figure, with a beautiful red and white complexion ; a skin the most transparent she ever saw, red hair, dark eyes and eyebrows, with a square forehead." To this we may add that the poet in features strongly resembled his mother.

## THE LITERARY WORK OF MR. PETER ROSS.

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IN that interesting and well-written work, *Scotland and the Scots: Essays Illustrative of Scottish Life, History, and Character* (New York: *Scottish American*), we read: "In journalism we find the Scot in the foremost ranks. The New York *Herald* was founded by James Gordon Bennett, a native of Aberdeen. Whitelaw Reid, the editor of the New York *Tribune*, is of immediate Scotch descent. William Swinton has had a stirring and changeful career as a newspaper correspondent, editor and man of letters. Thomas C. Latta, of the Brooklyn *Times*, a native of Fifeshire, is perhaps better known as a song writer than a journalist, but his long connection with the press warrants his being mentioned here. Col. McClure, the best known journalist in Philadelphia, claims Scottish descent. George Brown, of the Toronto *Globe*, was a native of Edinburgh, and the founder of the Montreal *Witness*, Mr. John Dougall, was a native of Paisley. The Guelph *Mercury* was owned and edited for nearly a quarter of a century by George Pirie, a native of Aberdeen, and a lyrical

poet of much ability. Daniel Morrison, a native of Inverness, did much good service as a journalist on such papers as the *Toronto Leader* and the *New York Tribune*."

Many other notable names might appropriately be added to this list of distinguished Scottish-American *littérateurs*, and perhaps none more deservedly than that of the author of the book from which we have just made the quotation—Mr. Peter Ross. For over twenty-five years he has successfully laboured in the literary field as journalist and author, and he was for many years on the staff of the *Scottish-American* of New York. To-day he is what is known as a special contributor on several of our great daily and weekly newspapers, besides being a writer for the *Westminster Review* and one or two other British publications. Mr. Ross is a native of Inverness, Scotland, having been born there on the 11th of January, 1847. A few years later his parents removed to Edinburgh, and here in due time the boy began his educational studies. He proved a willing and apt scholar and in consequence was rapidly promoted. At an early age he exhibited particularly bright literary talents, and many of his juvenile essays, which are still preserved in the family, show that as a boy he possessed good discriminating powers and a sound literary judgment. Books, magazines, papers and

dramas of all kinds were eagerly and thoroughly read by the fireside in those days, and as he has steadily kept abreast of the times in all matters pertaining to literature, it may readily be conjectured that there is no better versed man in book lore in New York city to-day than he is.

As soon as his school days were over, or at the age of fourteen, he became apprenticed to Miles Macphail, the once famous Established Church publisher in Edinburgh. Here he met and conversed with many of the most brilliant literary minds of Scotland at the time, including Russell, the great editor of the *Scotsman*; Manson of the *Daily Review*; Phineas Deseret, J. W. Ebsworth, Dr. Robert Lee, Dr. Bonar of The Canongate; Dean Ramsay, Dr. Cook of Haddington; Cosmo Innes, J. Hill Burton, the historian; Dr. M'Lauchlin of St. Columba; Maclagan, the poet; Sir James Y. Simpson and others. After leaving Macphail's establishment Mr. Ross was employed in various stores in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and had already accomplished some excellent literary work. He contributed a history of Edinburgh to the *Midlothian Advertiser*, and several clever articles from his pen appeared in the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, the *Caledonian Mercury*, the *Glasgow Mail*, etc.

In 1870, he edited the *Poetical Works of Sir*



*William Alexander*, in three large volumes, and in 1871 he compiled and published *The Songs of Scotland, Chronologically Arranged with Memoirs and Notes*. This work had a very extensive sale from the first, and a number of editions were rapidly disposed of. A new edition with preface, etc., has just been issued by the enterprising Scottish publisher, Mr. Alexander Gardner, of Paisley, and the press in general has accorded it a very hearty welcome in its new form. It has long since been classed as a standard on the subject, and it is to be found in every public and prominent library in the British Empire. Besides brief memoirs of the authors, it contains a great amount of historical and antiquarian information, which is of the highest value not only to the student but to every one interested in any way in the song literature of Scotland. "A special purpose of the book," writes Mr. Ross in his preface to the third edition, "was that it should be thoroughly national. Nothing was admitted to its pages that was not the production of Scottish writers. My idea was that the song minstrelsy of Scotland was in itself grand enough and varied enough to be measured by its native productions solely. This high standard was endorsed by many of the English reviews of the book, notably that of the *London Standard*, which closed a markedly appreciative notice by saying

that the collection was 'the most convenient and exhaustive we have seen of the songs of Scotland, which, taken as a body of lyric poetry, have not been surpassed even by the lyric poets of Greece, hitherto the supreme masters of the lyric muse.' The same idea was also enunciated by the laudatory notice which appeared in the *Westminster Review*. Had the volume not been thoroughly Scotch, these compliments would not have been so clearly earned."

Mr. Ross was married at Perth in 1872 to Miss Mary Dryerre, an accomplished and highly intelligent young lady, and sister of the well-known Perthshire poet and correspondent, Henry Dryerre of Blairgowrie. In the fall of 1873, and under the impression that the United States afforded better opportunities for advancement in a literary career he took up his residence in New York city. Here he at once identified himself with the press, and ere long became a recognized authority on matters relating to Great Britain, and especially to Scotland. He also took an active part in Scottish society matters, and for many years past he has been unanimously elected secretary of the North American Caledonian Association, the Grand Lodge, so to speak, of the Caledonian clubs of the United States and Canada.

In 1886 he published his first American work,

*A Life of Saint Andrew*, and very appropriately dedicated it to John S. Kennedy, Esq., then president of the St. Andrew's Society of the State of New York. This was a peculiar work and soon commanded attention from prominent Scotsmen in all parts of America. It treats of St. Andrew from his early years, describes his missionary work in detail as far as is known, tells about his closing years, how he became the patron saint for Scotland, etc. But the most interesting chapter in the book to the writer is the one entitled "Saint Andrew among the Poets." This chapter contains some really excellent poetry on the subject of Saint Andrew, and great credit is due to Mr. Ross for having brought so much of it together and in so convenient a form.

The chapter ends very neatly with a poem that first appeared in the *Christian at Work*, entitled "Twa Scots." No author's name is attached to the poem, and as it has been quoted far and wide it will no doubt interest many people to know that Mr. Ross himself is the author of it. The three last verses are particularly fine, while the composition taken altogether proves that the author possesses a true poetic faculty, a gift which he ought to cultivate much more than he evidently does at present :

## TWA SCOTS.

Twa youthfu' Scots came ower the sea  
Frae where the Spey first meets the ocean,  
To try and win Dame Fortune's smiles  
In farm toil or trade's commotion.

They loved their hame, its hills and dales,  
Wi' grand historic lore attendant,  
But lack o' gear gaed little hope  
That bidin', they'd be independent.

By wild Lake Erie's rugged shore  
They settled, and wi' sturdy toil  
They clear'd a farm frae brush and root,  
And glean'd gear frae the virgin soil.

And twa miles south there lay a toun  
Where centered a' the county's treasure ;  
And soon in it they had some trade,  
Their craps to sell, their corn to measure.

Their lassies syne frae Scotland cam',  
And settled down in comfort wi' them,  
And weel-stocked houses crown'd the farm  
And couthy bairns were born to them.

As years roll'd on their interests lay  
Alike at stake in farm an' toun ;  
And wealth cam' flowin' in apace  
And blythesome ilka day wore roun'.

Ane owned a railroad, ane a mine,  
Ane had a mill and ane a quarry,  
And as their hands grew fu', their bairns  
Took part and hain'd them frae the worry.

Ane built a kirk, and fee'd it fair ;  
Ane built the puir, the sick, the lame  
A snug and bien' like restin' place,  
And call'd it a Saint Andrew's Hame.

And to the puir at hame, some wealth  
They freely sent baith spring and simmer,  
And mony a frail man blessed their names,  
And for their peace pray'd mony a kimmer.

Sae passed their lives content and pure,  
Aye winnin' love through bein' kindly,  
And helpin' ithers up the brae  
They ance had clamb sae sair and blindly.

And when at last their time did come,  
And baith to their lang hame were carried,  
The neighbours a' for mony miles  
Foregathered roun' where they were buried.

And o'er their graves is ae braid stane  
Which haps their clay frae weat and wind ;  
And at the foot are carved these lines,  
'Neath where their names are intertwined :

“ God rest them ! Now their work is o'er ;  
On their fair fame there's ne'er a blot,  
They acted well their several parts  
And loved to help a brither Scot.

“ For this was aye their hamely creed—  
Ilk Scotsman is a Scotsman's brither ;—  
And whiles wi' glee they sung a sang,  
Some auld stave learned on hills o' heather.

“ They did whate'er they thought was right,  
And shared alike earth's glee and sorrow ;  
And when life's work was done and past,  
They won the peace which comes—to-morrow.”

Mr. Ross's next contribution to Scottish American literature was *Scotland and the Scots*, the work from which we made our opening extract. Too much praise cannot be bestowed on this work, as it is one of high literary merit, and such men as Professor John Stuart Blackie, Rev. Dr. Charles Rogers, and Rev. Dr. William M. Taylor have referred to it in very flattering terms. But apart from this it forms delightful and profitable reading for Americans and others, and it will in time become a handy work of reference on the subject of which it treats. As the *New York Sun* said: "The characteristics of Scotsmen are very carefully and accurately portrayed. The chapter on the 'Scot in America' affords much interesting information regarding his influence upon the civilization of the new world;" while the *Critic* in a more extended view of the book concluded by saying:—

"Scotland and the Scots" aids much in showing what contributions Scotch blood and Scotch genius have made to the world's fund of enterprise and intelligence; where the minor Scotlands of to-day are to be found; what communities apart from the parent land are still markedly Scotch; and what forms Scotch institutions have taken in exile. Mr. Ross's book abounds in curious and interesting information on all those and many more topics, including Scottish characteristics, anniver-

saries, holidays, superstitions and sports. There are two particularly instructive chapters on 'The Scot in America' and 'Scot Abroad,' from which we gather how penetrating, not to say pervasive, the Scotchman has been from the time he began to wander at all. . . . Now if some one will treat the Welsh and Irish elements of our civilization as fully and patriotically, the historian of the future at least will not have to fall back upon fables like Livy's or poems like that of 'El Cid,' for his historical perspectives."

*Scotland and the Scots* is dedicated to "Captain J. B. White, Fort Wayne, Indiana, member of Congress from Fort Wayne, who, as a merchant, soldier and legislator, has proved himself a typical representative of the Scot in America, while his active interest in everything relating to the land of his birth shows that it still retains his reverent love."

Mr. Ross is at present engaged on the manuscripts of some other works, the most important one being *A History of Scottish Literature*. This work has cost him several years of close study and research, and two years ago he accumulated considerable special information for it while on a visit to Scotland. It is not a mere history of Scottish poetry, but a complete history of Scottish literature, embracing all branches from the earliest

period down to the present day. It is well advanced towards completion, and when published, from what the writer has seen of it, the student and others interested in the subject, will, like him, be gratified at the evidence it presents of Scotland's literary wealth in all departments.

It is almost unnecessary to say that Mr. Ross is a great admirer of the national poet, Robert Burns, and that he has written some very fine articles in connection with the poet and his times. A few of these articles have been reprinted in such works as *Highland Mary*, *Burnsiana*, etc.,. He is also an enthusiastic Free-Mason, having been originally initiated into The Thistle and Rose Lodge, Glasgow. On his arrival in New York he joined Scotia Lodge and has held many of its offices, in particular, that of master for two years and treasurer for several years. In his recent visit to Scotland he was elected an honorary member of Canongate Kilwinning Lodge, No. 2, Edinburgh, the lodge, by the way, of which Robert Burns was crowned poet laureate, and of this honour he is justly proud.

Apart from the books which Mr. Ross has published, he is the author of a number of interesting lectures, which have been delivered in the best possible style by Mr. Charles H. Govan, the well-known elocutionist, before large audiences in New



York, Brooklyn, Boston, and other large cities. These lectures are on various subjects, such as "Burns in the Highlands," "A Night with Sir Walter Scott," "The Great Scottish-American Author, Washington Irving," "Old Edinburgh," "A Run Through Scotland," etc. They are well written and form a very delightful and instructive evening's entertainment. We might say considerably more in connection with Mr. Ross and his literary abilities, but we presume we have said sufficient for the time being. We would simply add, by way of conclusion, that he is a warm-hearted, whole souled-man, and a patriotic American citizen. Such men as he are a credit to the country and help in their own way to sustain the respect in which the United States is held abroad.

## HENRY MACKENZIE

AND THE FIRST REVIEW OF BURNS'S POEMS.

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HENRY MACKENZIE, author of *The Man of Feeling*, *The Man of the World*, *Julia de Roubigné*, etc., was born at Edinburgh in August, 1745. He was the son of a well known physician and received a careful and classical education. He afterwards studied law, and in 1775 went to London to study the modes of English exchequer practice. Shortly after his return to his native city he was appointed attorney for the crown in the exchequer court.

In 1777 he became connected with a social society which numbered among its members many of the prominent literary lights of the Scottish capital at the time. At these meetings essays were read, and these were afterwards published in a weekly paper called the *Mirror*, and later on in a similar paper called the *Lounger*. In the latter publication, on the ninth of December, 1786, Mackenzie published the first critique which had appeared on the poems of Robert Burns—a critique which awarded the poet a great deal of praise, and served to introduce his poems to the fashion-

able and higher ranks of society throughout Scotland and England.

This critique is rarely to be met with nowadays, and we therefore take pleasure in presenting it to our readers. Its somewhat lengthy title is—*Surprising effects of Original Genius, exemplified in the Poetical Productions of Robert Burns, an Ayrshire Ploughman* :—

“To the feeling and the susceptible there is something wonderfully pleasing in the contemplation of genius, of that supereminent reach of mind by which some men are distinguished. In the view of highly superior talents, as in that of great and stupendous natural objects, there is a sublimity which fills the soul with wonder and delight, which expands it, as it were, beyond its usual bounds, and which, investing our nature with extraordinary honours, interests our curiosity and flatters our pride.

“This divinity of genius, however, which admiration is fond to worship, is best arrayed in the darkness of distant and remote periods, and is not easily acknowledged in the present times, or in places with which we are perfectly acquainted. Exclusive of all the deductions which envy or jealousy may sometimes be supposed to make, there is a familiarity in the near approach of persons around us, not very consistent with the lofty

ideas which we wish to form of him who has led captive our imagination in the triumph of his fancy, overpowered our feelings with the tide of passion, or enlightened our reason with the investigation of hidden truths. It may be that, 'in the olden time,' genius had some advantages which tended to its vigour and its growth; but it is not unlikely that, even in these degenerate days, it rises much oftener than it is observed; that in "the ignorant present time" our posterity may find names which they will dignify, though we neglected, and pay to their memory those honours which their contemporaries have denied them.

"There is, however, a natural, and, indeed, a fortunate vanity in trying to redress this wrong which genius is exposed to suffer. In the discovery of talents generally unknown, men are apt to indulge the same fond partiality as in all other discoveries which themselves have made; and hence we have had repeated instances of painters and of poets, who have been drawn from obscure situations, and held forth to public notice and applause by the extravagant encomiums of their introducers, yet in a short time have sunk again to their former obscurity; whose merit, though perhaps somewhat neglected, did not appear much undervalued by the world, and could not support, by its own intrinsic excellence, the superior place which the

enthusiasm of its patrons would have assigned it. I know not if I shall be accused of such enthusiasm and partiality when I introduce to the notice of my readers a poet of our own country, with whose writings I have lately become acquainted ; but, if I am not greatly deceived, I think I may safely pronounce him a genius of no ordinary rank. The person to whom I allude is Robert Burns, an Ayrshire ploughman, whose poems were some time ago published in a country town in the west of Scotland, with no other ambition, it would seem, than to circulate among the inhabitants of the country where he was born, to obtain a little fame from those who had heard of his talents. I hope I shall not be thought to assume too much if I endeavour to place him in a higher point of view, to call for a verdict of his country on the merit of his works, and to claim for him those honours which their excellence appears to deserve.

“In mentioning the circumstance of his humble station, I mean not to rest his pretensions solely on that title or to urge the merits of his poetry when considered in relation to the lowness of his birth, and the little opportunity of improvement which his education could afford. These particulars, indeed, might excite our wonder at his productions ; but his poetry, considered abstractedly, and without the apologies arising from his

situation, seems to me fully entitled to command our feelings and to obtain our applause.

“One bar, indeed, his birth and education have opposed to his fame—the language in which most of his poems are written. Even in Scotland the provincial dialect which Ramsay and he have used is now read with a difficulty which greatly damps the pleasure of the reader; in England it cannot be read at all without such a constant reference to a glossary as nearly to destroy the pleasure.

“Some of his productions, however, especially those of the grave style, are almost English. From one of these I shall first present my readers with an extract, in which, I think, they will discover a high tone of feeling, a power and energy of expression, particularly and strongly characteristic of the mind and the voice of a poet. ’Tis from his poem entitled ‘The Vision,’ in which the genius of his native county, Ayrshire, is thus supposed to address him :—

With future hope I oft would gaze  
Fond on thy little early ways.  
Thy rudely caroll’d ehiming phrase,  
In uncouth rhymes,  
Fired at the simple, artless lays  
Of other times.

I saw thee seek the sounding shore,  
Delighted with the dashing roar ;

Or when the north his fleecy store  
Drove thro' the sky,  
I saw grim nature's visage hoar  
Struck thy young eye.

Or when the deep-green mantled earth  
Warm cherish'd ev'ry flow'ret's birth,  
And joy and music pouring forth  
In ev'ry grove,  
I saw thee eye the general mirth  
With boundless love.

When ripen'd fields and azure skies,  
Called forth the reaper's rustling noise,  
I saw thee leave their evening joys,  
And lonely stalk,  
To vent thy bosom's swelling rise  
In pensive walk.

When youthful love, warm-blushing, strong,  
Keen-shivering shot thy nerves along,  
Those accents, graceful to thy tongue,  
Th' adorned name,  
I taught thee how to pour in song,  
To soothe thy flame.

I saw thy pulse's maddening play,  
Wild send thee pleasure's devious way,  
Misled by fancy's meteor ray,  
By passion driven ;  
But yet the light that led astray  
Was light from heaven.

Of strains like the above, solemn and sublime,  
with that rapt and inspired melancholy in which  
the poet lifts his eye "above this visible diurnal

sphere," the poems entitled "Despondency," "The Lament," "Winter, a Dirge," and the "Invocation to Ruin," afford no less striking examples. Of the tender and the moral, specimens equally advantageous might be drawn from the elegiac verses entitled, "Man was made to mourn," from "The Cotter's Saturday Night," the stanzas "To a Mouse," or those "To a Mountain Daisy," on turning it down with the plough in April, 1786. This last poem I shall insert entire, not from its superior merit, but because its length suits the bounds of my paper:

Wee, modest, crimson-tipp'd flow'r,  
Thou's met me in an evil hour,  
For I maun crush amang the stoure  
Thy slender stem ;  
To spare thee now is past my pow'r,  
Thou bonnie gem.

Alas ! it's no thy neibor sweet,  
The bonny lark, companion meet !  
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet !  
Wi' spreckl'd breast,  
When upward-springing, blithe, to greet  
The purpling east.

Could blew the bitter-biting north  
Upon thy early, humble birth ;  
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth  
Amid the storm,  
Scarce rear'd above the parent earth  
Thy tender form,



The flaunting flow'rs our gardens yield,  
High shelt'ring woods and wa's maun shield :  
But though beneath the random bield  
    O' clod or stane,  
Adorn the histie-stibble-field,  
    Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,  
Thy snawie bosom sunward spread,  
Thou lifts thy unassuming head  
    In humble guise ;  
But now the share uptears thy bed,  
    And low thou lies !

Such is the fate of artless maid,  
Sweet floweret of the rural shade !  
By love's simplicity betray'd,  
    And guileless trust,  
Till she, like thee, all soil'd is laid  
    Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple bard,  
On life's rough ocean luckless starr'd !  
Unskilled he to note the card  
    Of prudent lore,  
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,  
    And whelm him o'er !

Such fate to suffering worth is giv'n,  
Who long with wants and woes has striv'n,  
By human pride or cunning driv'n  
    To mis'ry's brink,  
Till wrenched of every stay but heaven,  
    He, ruin'd, sink !

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the daisy's fate,  
That fate is thine—no distant date ;  
Steru Ruin's plough-share drives, elate  
Full on thy bloom.  
Till crushed beneath the furrow's weight,  
Shall be thy doom !

I have seldom met with an image more truly pastoral than that of the lark in the second stanza. Such strokes as these mark the pencil of the poet, which delineates nature with the precision of intimacy, yet with the delicate colouring of beauty and of taste. The power of genius is not less admirable in tracing the manners than in painting the scenery of nature. That intuitive glance with which a writer like Shakespeare discerns the characters of men, with which he catches the many changing lines of life, forms a sort of problem in the science of mind, of which it is easier to see the truth than to assign the cause.

Though I am very far from meaning to compare our rustic bard to Shakespeare, yet whoever will read his lighter and more humorous poems, his "Dialogue of the Dogs," his "Dedication to G—— H——, Esq.," his "Epistle to a Young Friend," and "To W. S——n," will perceive with what uncommon penetration and sagacity this heaven-taught ploughman, from his humble and unlettered station, has looked upon men and manners.

“Against some passages of these last-mentioned poems it has been objected that they breathe a spirit of libertinism and irreligion. But, if we consider the ignorance and fanaticism of the lower class of people in the country where these poems were written, a fanaticism of that pernicious sort which sets faith in opposition to good works, the fallacy and danger which a mind so enlightened as our poet’s could not but perceive, we shall not look upon his lighter muse as the enemy of religion (of which in several places he expresses the justest sentiments) though she has been somewhat unguarded in her ridicule of hypocrisy.

“In this, as in other respects, it must be allowed that there are exceptional parts of the volume he has given to the public, which caution would have suppressed, or correction struck out; but poets are seldom cautious, and our poet had, alas! no friends or companions from whom correction could be obtained. When we reflect on his rank in life, the habits to which he must have been subject, and the society in which he must have mixed, we regret perhaps more than wonder that delicacy should be so often offended in perusing a volume in which there is so much to interest and to please us.

“Burns possesses the spirit as well as the fancy of a poet. That honest pride and independence of

soul which are sometimes the muse's only dower, break forth on every occasion in his works. It may be, then, I shall wrong his feelings while I indulge my own, in calling the attention of the public to his situation and circumstances. That condition, humble as it was, in which he found content, and wooed the muse, might not be deemed uncomfortable; but grief and misfortunes have reached him there; and one or two of his poems hint, what I have learnt from some of his countrymen, that he has been obliged to form the resolution of leaving his native land, to seek, under a West Indian clime, that shelter and support which Scotland has denied him. But I trust means may be found to prevent this resolution from taking place; and to do my country no more than justice when I suppose her ready to stretch out her hand to cherish and retain this native poet, whose "wood-notes wild," possess so much excellence. To repair the wrongs of suffering or neglected merit, to call forth genius from the obscurity in which it had pined indignant, and place it where it may profit or delight the world; these are exertions which give to wealth an enviable superiority, to greatness and to patronage a laudable pride."

Up to the time when the above review appeared Mackenzie and the poet had not met, but they soon became friends and continued such till the

death of Burns, in 1796. The poet entertained a very high opinion of his reviewer and referred to him and his works on several occasions. Writing to Mrs. Dunlop on the tenth of April, 1790, he says, "Mackenzie has been called the Addison of the Scots, and in my opinion, Addison would not be hurt at the comparison. If he has not Addison's exquisite humour he as certainly out-does him in the tender and the pathetic. His 'Man of Feeling' (but I am not counsel learned in the law of criticism), I estimate as the first performance in its kind I ever saw. From what book, moral or even pious, will the susceptible young mind receive impressions more congenial to humanity and kindness, generosity and benevolence; in short, more of all that ennobles the soul to herself or endears her to others—than from the simple affecting tale of poor Harley." Sir Walter Scott also had a high regard for Mackenzie and his writings, and to him he dedicated the first of his great romances, *Waverley*. "The time, we hope, is yet distant," writes Sir Walter, "when, speaking of this author as of those with whom his genius ranks him, a biographer may with delicacy trace his personal character and peculiarities, or record the manner in which he has discharged the duties of a citizen.

"When that hour shall arrive we trust few of his contemporaries will be left to mourn him; but

we can anticipate the sorrow of a later generation, when deprived of the wit which enlivened their hours of enjoyment, the benevolence which directed and encouraged their studies, and the wisdom which instructed them in their duties to society. It is enough to say here that Mr. Mackenzie survives, venerable and venerated, as the last link of the chain which connects the Scottish literature of the present age with the period when there were giants in the land—the days of Robertson and Hume, and Smith, and Home, and Clark, and Ferguson; and that the remembrance of an era so interesting could not have been intrusted to a sounder judgment, a more correct taste, or a more tenacious memory.

“But it is as a novelist that we are now called on to consider our author’s powers, and the universal and permanent popularity of his writings entitles us to rank him amongst the most distinguished of his class. His works possess the rare and invaluable property of originality, to which all other qualities are as dust in the balance; and the sources to which he resorts to excite our interest are rendered accessible by a path peculiarly his own.” Besides “*The Man of Feeling*” and the other works already referred to, Mackenzie published a volume of translations and dramatic pieces in 1791, a life of Dr. Blacklock in 1793, and a life

of John Horne, author of "Douglas," in 1812. A complete edition of his works in eight large octavo volumes was published in 1808. He died in January, 1831, at the advanced age of eighty-six.

Speaking of Mackenzie, the author of *Peter's Letters*, published in 1820, says: "I have never seen a finer specimen, both in appearance and manners, of the gentleman of the last age. In his youth he must have been a perfect model of manly beauty; and, indeed, no painter could select a more exquisite subject for his art even now. His hair combed back from his forehead, and highly powdered; his long queue, his lace ruffles, his suit of snuff-coloured cloth, cut in the old liberal way, with long flaps to his waistcoat, his high-heeled shoes, and rich stout buckles—everything was in perfect unison in all the fashion of his age."

THE POET LATTO.  
A TRIBUTE TO HIS MEMORY.

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[THE following letter on the death of Mr. Thomas C. Latto, appeared in a recent issue of the *Edinburgh Weekly Scotsman*.]

Doubtless many of your readers have mourned with us here in America over the death of the gifted Scottish song-writer and poet, Mr. Thomas Carstairs Latto. This sad event occurred at his home in Brooklyn, New York, and created profound sorrow among his numerous friends and admirers. A kindly, gentle, genial, generous, honest soul—one of Nature's noblemen—his memory will always be cherished by those who were privileged to know him or to come in contact with him. As a man of letters his place at present may simply be among the minor poets of his country, but he has left poems in MS. superior even to those acknowledged immortal effusions of his which have already been published, and these will ultimately procure for him a high position among the prominent Scottish poets of the nineteenth century.



The Scottish nation may not yet fully appreciate the fact, but in the death of Thomas C. Latto one of the best of their sweet singers has passed away.

It was with very solemn feelings that the writer of this brief tribute, and the distinguished Scottish poet, Mr. Duncan MacGregor Crerar, wended their way to the house of the deceased, to take part in the funeral services, and to look for the last time on the face of the beloved bard. To Mr. Crerar, indeed, the occasion was a particularly sad one, as between him and Mr. Latto a warm friendship had existed for more than thirty years.

Passing over the grief-stricken threshold, we were ushered into the death chamber, where we gazed for a moment on the noble features of him whose journey through life was now terminated. It was a painful realization for us. The next moment my companion quietly took from his pocket a dainty little spray of Amulree heather, and placed it reverently on the poet's bosom. And never did heather look so grand to me as it did then. Costly flowers of all kinds lay strewn around us in great profusion, filling the atmosphere with their rare and fragrant perfumes; but none of them looked so beautiful as the modest little purple spray that nestled on the bosom of the dead poet. One of Mr. Latto's last poems was on a sprig of the national flower, and he had inscribed

the piece to the friend who was now standing at his side, and in what an appropriate manner had this gentleman shown his appreciation of the honour paid to him! These was something truly sublime to me in the seemingly simple incident, and I never longed to possess the genius of a poet as I did on that evening. But nature had not bestowed this priceless gift on me, and I could only regret that it was not within my power to set forth in glowing and undying language the thoughts which the incident had awakened in my heart! “He placed a spray of heather on his breast!” What an inspiring title and subject for a poet to write on. Possibly some member of the honoured Bardic Clan in Auld Scotia, however, may read these lines and be inspired to undertake and accomplish that which I dared not even attempt.

The funeral service was conducted at eight o'clock, and the Rev. Dr. S. Giffard Nelson delivered an address—oration it might properly be termed—which was listened to with breathless attention. Feeling assured that the many friends of Mr. Latto in Scotland and elsewhere would be glad to read it, I take sincere pleasure in appending a portion of it:—

“What need has he of our poor praise who now is rewarded by the Master’s welcome and cheered

by the hail of his comrades of the lyre who passed before him into the land where beatific vision finds its realization? Over all the world, but chiefly in Scottish hearts, his melodies have sung themselves to-day. The affections they awaken are his chaplet. The tears they evoke, tender as the dews upon the Highland heather, are the jewels that bedeck his fame. Henceforth his lot is in two worlds. He lives for ever yonder, and here he cannot die.

“Those who were his colleagues and companions in the world of letters have already spoken of his work with the authority that belongs to literary eminence, and with that heartiness of royal friendship that his blameless life inspired. The judgment they have pronounced is one that the future shall accept as its own. It is a judgment that would find a general acquiescence, were it not that the singer’s accents, being those of his native land, narrowed his territory to people of his own clime and race.

“Although Brooklyn was his home for forty years and more, few within its borders knew his eminence abroad. He sang for Scotland and for Scotsmen, not wholly indeed, but with such frequency that the American public seldom heard him in strains familiar to the popular ear. But among his lyrics in English, pure and undefiled,

are some that will hold a foremost place in the poetry of the century.

“Born in Kingsbarns, Fife, Scotland, 1818, he was educated at the University of St. Andrews, and destined himself for the bar of his native land. But his nature was too gentle, meek and retiring for the conflicts of courts, and in literature he found his goal. He was one of the brilliant company who made *Blackwood's Magazine* famous. Among his colleagues were Professor Wilson (Christopher North), the Ettrick Shepherd, Lord Macaulay, Lord Jeffrey, Lord Neaves, Henry Glassford Bell, and Sheriff Alison. These distinguished men had for his genius unaffected admiration, and throughout their lives maintained intercourse and correspondence with him. He disliked notoriety, and was content to do his work unseen and unapplauded. I remember well, just a year and a half ago, when some literary men and journalists of this city desired to do him honour, they entrusted to me the agreeable duty of inviting him to a banquet. I shall never forget how the dear old man raised his hands in deprecation, and exclaimed, ‘Well, well, is it possible you have known me so long and do not know that I could never consent to anything like that?’ And consent he would not, meeting every gentle insistence by shaking his silver locks and uttering the meek

rejoinder, 'No, no! I never wanted any fuss made about me, and I'm too old to stand it now.' So we were obliged to give up our project.

"The character of Thomas C. Latto was the fitting complement of his genius. Of unsullied, sensitive honour, truthful to the core, scorning indirection however slight, he walked from first to last among his fellows in garments of white. His later years were lived in modest retirement, and to his home those of us who were his friends, as often as we could find opportunity, made our grateful pilgrimage. In our recollections the hallowed memory will ever linger of the dear old poet seated in his arm-chair, his long gray locks falling on his shoulders, his noble, unclouded brow awaiting the conviction—the realization of his own description of himself—

‘A patient Mordecai of song  
At Phœbus’ gate.’”

When the Doctor had finished, all present arose and gazed for a few seconds on the face of the illustrious dead. Many tears were shed, and many kind words were spoken. In little groups the company afterwards dispersed, but those who participated in the services of that evening are never likely to forget it. And in the writer's memory there will always be associated with the features of

Thomas C. Latto in death a bright little spray of Highland heather, clinging affectionately to his bosom, as if proud of the fact that it was destined to mingle its dust with that of the beloved poet.

## HON. WALLACE BRUCE:

*POET, ORATOR AND SCHOLAR*



DISTINGUISHED on the roll of American poets of the present century stands the name of Wallace Bruce. An accomplished scholar, a brilliant orator, a voluminous reader and an able critic, he combines with these artistic qualities the feelings and taste and imagination of a true poet, and many of his productions through their exquisite beauty have lent a lustre to the poetical literature of our country, and they are destined to live, and thus become a monument to his genius long after he has passed to his final reward.

His is indeed a muse of surpassing sweetness and excellence and power, and, to his credit be it said, there is not a line or a verse which he has penned that he need ever wish to blot out. As we glance leisurely through his poems we find here and there realistic touches of the fascinating beauty of Tennyson, the quaint simplicity of Wordsworth, the exuberant humour of Butler, the dramatic strength of Shakespeare, the divine loftiness of Milton, the sturdy independence of Burns, the weird charms

of Coleridge, the gentleness of Whittier, the melody of Moore, the picturesqueness of Chaucer, and the vivid descriptive power of Byron. His language is choice and appropriate, the expression dignified, the similes striking, the versification harmonious, while the subjects are invariably interesting and instructive. Truly an original and pleasing and inspired singer in all respects. Where all is so uniformly good it becomes a difficult matter to select pieces for quotation, especially when these pieces must necessarily be short ones and our author's talents are always displayed to better advantage in his longer compositions. Here is one however that will serve as an introduction:

#### THE SNOW ANGEL.

The sleigh-bells danced that winter night ;  
Old Brattleborough rang with glee ;  
The windows overflowed with light ;  
Joy ruled each hearth and Christmas tree.  
But to one the bells and mirth were naught :  
His soul with deeper joy was fraught.  
He waited until the guests were gone,  
He waited to dream his dream alone ;  
And the night wore on.

Alone he stands in the silent night ;  
He piles the snow in the village square ;  
With spade for chisel, a statue white  
From the crystal quarry rises fair.



No light, save the stars, to guide his hand,  
But the image obeys his soul's command.

The sky is draped with fleecy lawn,  
The stars grow pale in the early dawn,  
But the lad toils on.

And lo ! in the morn the people came  
To gaze at the wondrous vision there ;  
And they called it " The Angel," divining its name,  
For it came in silence and unaware.  
It seemed no mortal hand had wrought  
The uplifted face with prayerful thought :  
But its features wasted beneath the sun ;  
Its life went out ere the day was done ;  
And the lad dreamed on.

And his dream was this : In the years to be  
I will carve the Angel in lasting stone ;  
In another land ; beyond the sea,  
I will toil in darkness, will dream alone ;  
While others sleep I will find a way  
Up through the night to the light of day.  
There's nothing desired beneath star or sun  
Which patient genius has not won ;  
And the boy toiled on.

The years go by. He has wrought with might ;  
He has gained renown in the land of art ;  
But the thought inspired that Christmas night  
Still kept its place in the sculptor's heart ;  
And the dream of the boy, that melted away  
In the light of the sun that winter day,  
Is embodied at last in enduring stone,  
Snow Angel in marble—his purpose won ;  
And the man toils on.

"Wallace Bruce touches smoothly and sweetly chords that have an echo on both sides of the Atlantic," said the *Edinburgh Scotsman* in reviewing his poems, and the *Glasgow Herald* concluded an extended notice of his merit by saying, "His verse thrills with fine, free-flowing, vigorous spirit, which imparts to it that feeling of reality and freshness that gives to the poetry of Burns its permanent attraction." "Keenly alive to the beautiful," says the *Birmingham Gazette*, "whether in art or nature or home life," while the *Saturday Review* declares that there is to be found in his writings "freshness and power and a certain open-air flavor at no time common to writers of verse." The Rev. Henry Ward Beecher claimed that his poetry, "by its merit and beauty made its way to all eyes, ears and hearts," and Mr. Gladstone, acknowledging the receipt of one of his volumes, wrote: "The outward form is beautiful, and my first acquaintance with the contents is in harmony therewith."

As a poet, Mr. Bruce is endowed with a great command of language and an abundance of rhyme. His verses flow naturally and musically, and we become interested in them at once. The following poem, entitled "The Protest of the Immortals," may be given as a specimen of this. It was recited by Mr. Bruce at a banquet of the Edinburgh

Pen and Pencil Club, and was not only well received then but was much spoken of and quoted by the Scottish press at the time :

A singular meeting the other night !  
Did you hear of it up at Parliament Hall ?  
Just twelve o'clock, the moon shone bright ;  
A strange, weird brilliancy flooded all  
The rich-stained windows ; the portraits there  
The spectral radiance seemed to share.

I followed the crowd, a ghastly throng,  
A curious group of former days ;  
As through the portal it surged along  
Familiar faces met my gaze,  
As if the library down below  
Had yielded its worthies for public show.

In close procession, a hundred or more ;  
But it seemed so strange, no voice or word,  
No footfall on the oaken floor ;  
An old time Provost proffered a word,  
A motion forsooth, for then and there  
Sir Walter responded and took the chair.

He seemed full pale as he rose to speak,  
And bowed his head to the eager crowd,  
But a flush forthwith illumed his cheek,  
Erect his form, which erst was bowed ;  
Intent on the Wizard seemed to be  
That strange, peculiar company.

I noted expressions of scorn and pride  
Vividly flashed from face to face ;

The minstrel dashed a tear aside,  
Appealing, it seemed, to the Scottish race ;  
Ay more, each gesture seemed to be  
For his darling city a loving plea.

I saw him point to the legend there  
Emblazoned upon the windows high ;  
To the Crown that Scotia used to wear  
When her heroes dared to do and die :  
And he seemed to say, "Edina's crown  
Shall not for gold be trampled down."

All hands went up at the table round.  
Where sat Kit North with flowing quill,  
And the sentences seemed to leap and bound  
Like living sparks from his sturdy will—  
A protest deep, a trumpet-word  
Straight from the heart, for his soul was stirred.

A moment's pause ; they were asked to sign ;  
But who would lead that famous band ?  
Who on the roll of Auld Lang Syne,  
Prince or peasant, thus dared to stand ?  
With one accord the gathering turns,  
And straightway summoned Robert Burns.

He came, and proudly wrote his name,  
The clear, bold hand, beloved by all,  
And there seemed to burst a loud acclaim  
That shook the roof of the stately hall.  
His plain sign-manual seemed to say—  
We guard "Auld Reekie" from wrong to-day.

Shoulder to shoulder, in steady file,  
I noted them all as they passed along—

Dugald Stewart and stern Carlyle,  
Riddle and Lockhart, of Border song,  
Professor Aytoun and dear John Browne,  
Brougham and Erskine, in wig and gown ;

Hugh Millar and Pollock, Mackenzie, Blair,  
Cockburn, Jaffrey, and David Hume,  
Hogg and Ramsay—a curious pair,  
De Quincey, “Delta” in nom-de-plume,  
Drummond of Hawthornden, Boswell, Home,  
Fergusson, Alison—still they come.

They stood in groups, the roll was done ;  
The chairman rose, they listened all ;  
St. Giles pealed out the hour of one,  
They took their way from the silent hall ;  
Over the parchment alone I bent—  
It seemed like the League and Covenant.

I read it there in the fading light,  
A message strange from the shadowy past,  
With storied names for ever bright  
While Scotland’s fame and glory last ;  
The ink on that parchment shall never fade  
Till Arthur Seat in the Forth is laid.

“Stand by your city and guard it well—  
That street is more than a common wynd  
For smoking chimneys and sooty smell ;  
Has Plutus made your guardians blind ?  
What god your senses has so beguiled  
That Art and Nature shall be defiled ?”

So said Kit North ; and I read with joy—  
“Stand by your city and guard it well ;

For a mess of pottage, or base alloy,  
Who dare your birthright or beauty sell ?  
Never ! ah, never ! Edina, mine,  
Shall force or folly thy virtue tyne.

“Stand by your city and guard it well ;  
Burrow in rocks for your tunnelled ways,  
Taint not the soil with carbon fell,  
The flowers of the sod where the sunlight plays.”  
No wonder the hall with wild applause  
Greeted the reading of every clause.

“Stand by your city and guard it well ;  
Greed is mighty, but truth prevails ;  
Let not your children’s children tell  
How beauty was bartered for iron rails.”  
Such was the meeting in Parliament Hall—  
“Nemo impune !” Guard us all.

The entire poem proves that Mr. Bruce has a very sincere regard for Scotland, the home of his ancestors. He delights to talk and to lecture on her heroes, her poets, her statesmen and her preachers, and he loves her old traditions, her ballads, her songs, her literature and her customs, with a love that is hardly surpassed even by a native-born Scotsman. This love for Scotland and all things Scottish is visible in nearly all his writings and it was therefore a gratifying and appropriate compliment to Mr. Bruce when President Harrison appointed him United States Consul at Edinburgh. I now take pleasure in appending

another poem on a Scottish subject and one which I think all readers will admire.

The poem is thoroughly Scottish in tone and expression, besides being so well written that any Scottish poet would be pleased could he say that he was the author of it.

### INCH-CAILLIACH, LOCH LOMOND.

[The island burial-place of Clan Alpine, resembling, from Rossdhu, a reclining body with folded arms.]

No more Clan Alpine's pibroch wakes  
Loch Lomond's hills and waters blue ;  
"Hail to the Chief" no longer breaks  
The quiet sleep of Roderick Dhu ;  
Enwrapped in peace the islands gleam  
Like emerald gems in sapphire set,  
And, far away, as in a dream,  
Float purple fields where heroes met.

Inch-Cailliach—*island of the blest !*  
Columbia's daughter, passing fair,  
With folded arms upon her breast,  
Rests soft in sunset radiance there ;  
A vision sweet of fond Elaine,  
And floating barge of Camelot,  
Upon her brow no trace of pain,  
And on her heart "Forget me not."

Forget thee, saintly guardian ? Nay,  
From the distant lands across the sea  
To this lone isle I fondly stray  
With song and garland fresh for thee ;

I trace the old inscriptions dear,  
Fast fading now from mortal ken,  
And through the silver lichens peer  
To read McAlpine's name again

My mother's name, a sacred link  
Which binds me to the storied past ;  
A rainbow bridge from brink to brink  
Which spans with light the centuries vast.  
Two hundred years ! Clan-Alpine's pine  
Has struck its roots in other lands ;  
My pulses thrill to trace the sign  
And touch the cross with reverent hands.

All ruin here !—the shrine is dust,  
The chapel wall a shapeless mound ;  
But Nature guards with loving trust,  
And ivy twines her tendrils round  
The humble slab, more fitting far  
Than gilded dome for Scotia's line ;  
The open sky and northern star  
Become the chieftains of the pine.

The light streams out from fair Rossdhu  
Across the golden-tinted wave ;  
That crumbling keep, that ancient yew,  
Still mark a worthy foeman's grave ;  
But warm the hearts that now await  
Our coming at the open door,  
With love and friendship at the gate,  
And beacon-lights along the shore.

Dear Scotia ! evermore more dear  
To loyal sons in every land ;  
Strong in a race that knew no fear,  
And for man's freedom dared to stand ;



Ay, dearer for thy songs that float  
Like thistle-down o'er land and sea,  
And strike the universal note  
Of love, and faith, and liberty.

Mr. Rowland B. Mahany, writing of Mr. Bruce in *The Magazine of Poetry* says: "It is as a poet, however, that his genius shines with the greatest lustre. Disregarding the mannerisms and conceits of the present school, whose productions are at best but ephemeral, he has held fast to old standards, and struck a tone whose echo is destined to vibrate in the hearts of listeners, now and hereafter. No American poet of this generation, not even Whittier, has set to sweeter music the tender memories of home. Without the broad effects of Will Carleton or the stilted moralizing of Longfellow, Wallace Bruce's "Old Homestead Poems," have that delicacy of fancy, sincerity of expression, and depth of feeling which give fitting utterance to the vague sanctity with which we hallow the past. The same truthfulness of motive is characteristic of all his verses, even when his abounding humour ripples into song. This nobility of purpose and excellence of execution are the qualities which make those familiar with his work enthusiastic admirers. His shorter lyrics, published in the leading magazines, have always been widely praised and copied; and the fervent patriotism

that pulsates through his poems has caused his selection as poet on many distinguished occasions, notably at the Newburg Centennial, over which President Arthur presided, and at which Senator Evarts and Senator Bayard were the chief orators. The success of "The Long Drama," read by Mr. Bruce, was by common consent the triumph of the celebration. Patriotism is certainly another predominating feature in many of Mr. Bruce's poems. It is introduced and interwoven into his verses with great skill and always commands our admiration. Nor are his efforts in this direction confined to America alone. Wherever the bugle has sounded in the cause of liberty and right, that country has become sacred ground to him. But his patriotism is never boisterous or unpoetical. It is set forth clothed in the finest of language and very guarded in expression, so as to give offence to no one. The following poem, besides being one of his best, will give a good idea of this particular feature of his muse:—

"UNO DE MILLE."

BY WALLACE BRUCE.

ONE OF THE THOUSAND OF GARIBALDI.

LAKE COMO.

[One April day in 1890 I saw a steamer draped in black bring home to Como for burial a soldier of the immortal One Thousand of Garibaldi. By

a strange and dramatic coincidence his comrade, an eloquent scholar of Como, died a few hours later at his desk, while preparing for the morrow a tribute to his friend's memory, and on the next day the boat bore his own body to his own kindred.—  
W. B.]

Another gone of the thousand brave ;  
Across Lake Como borne to his grave.  
“ Uno de Mille,” they softly say,  
Waiting there by the quiet bay ;  
A crowded plaza, a weeping sky—  
Hush ! the steamer is drawing nigh.

“ Uno de Mille ! ” Who is he ?  
A soldier, they whisper, of liberty ;  
One of the thousand from college hall  
Who rallied at Garibaldi's call :  
His voyage finished, the anchor cast,  
Home at Como to sleep at last.

Home, by her rippling waters blue,  
Mirroring skies of tender hue ;  
Home, where a kinsman's heart-felt tear  
Hallows a brother soldier's bier ;  
Home, where a noble comrade now  
Plaits a chaplet to grace his brow.

Strew with roses the hero's way,  
Over the sleeping warrior pray ;  
Home, from journeying far and wide,  
Welcome him here with stately pride ;  
The night, my brother, comes to me,  
The morn, Italia, to thee !

Strew with roses the hero's way,  
Over the sleeping warrior pray ;  
Wake, Italia ! speak for me,  
Reunited from sea to sea,  
Place a garland upon his bier,  
" Uno de Mille " is lying here.

Thus mused his comrade through the night,  
Weaving a chaplet fresh and bright,  
Sorrowing for a brother dead,  
Summoning hours forever fled ;  
The light burns dim, the dawning day  
Touches the mountains cold and gray.

The pen has fallen from his grasp,  
His head is bowed, his hands unclasp ;  
The sunlight pierces the casement there,  
He greets the morning with stony stare ;  
The day, Italia, breaks for thee !  
The night, my brother, comes to me.

Not as he deemed. He little thought  
The morrow's work would be unwrought,  
Little he dreamed the boat that bore  
His comrade dead to Como's shore,  
Dark-draped its homeward course would keep  
To bear him, too, where his kinsmen sleep.

Hushed again the crowded square,  
Sky and lake the stillness share ;  
Over the mountains a fading glow,—  
" Duo de Mille," they murmur low ;  
One, with tapers in yonder dome,  
One, 'neath the starlight, going home.

And so they parted, not in tears,  
Wedded in death through coming years ;  
Sleeping remote by the sunny shore,  
Reunited for ever more !  
Lake Como sings one song to me—  
“The morn, Italia, to thee !

Here also is a touching little poem on the death of General Grant, and in which the same quiet patriotic feeling will be noticed. The poem is founded on the following incident. It is said that when Grant was dying a ray of sunlight through the half-closed shutters of his room fell upon Lincoln's picture, leaving the general's portrait, which hung beside it, in deep shadow. After lingering for a moment on the brow of the martyred President it passed at the instant of death and played upon the portrait of the great general.

#### THE SILENT SOLDIER.

From gulf to lake, from sea to sea,  
The land is draped—a nation weeps,  
And o'er the bier bows reverently  
Whereon the silent soldier sleeps,

The mountain top is bathed in light,  
And eastern cliff with outlook wide ;  
Its name shall live in memory bright—  
The Mount MacGregor, where he died !

A monument to stand for aye,  
In summer's bloom, in winter's snows,

A shrine where men shall come to pray,  
While at its base the Hudson flows.

A humble room, the light burns low,  
The morning breaks on distant hill,  
The falling pulse is beating slow,  
The group is motionless and still.

Two portraits hang upon the wall,  
Two kindred pictures side by side—  
Statesman and soldier, loved by all—  
Lincoln and Grant, Columbia's pride.

A single ray through lattice streams,  
And breaks in rainbow colours there ;  
On Lincoln's brow a glory gleams,  
As wife and children kneel in prayer.

A halo round the martyr's head,  
It lights the sad and solemn room,  
Above the living and the dead,  
The soldier's portrait hangs in gloom.

In shadow one, and one in light ;  
But look ! the pencil-ray has past,  
And on the hero's picture bright  
The golden sunlight rests at last.

And so, throughout the coming years,  
On both the morning beam shall play,  
When the long night of bitter tears  
Has melted in the light away.

A highly moral and religious sentiment pervades all of Mr. Bruce's work, and this character-

istic makes his writings all the more acceptable to readers of intelligence and refinement. Indeed, many of his smaller poems are on religious subjects entirely, and each of them gives strong evidence that their author is a man who has a sincere reverence for his Maker and for all things holy. A brief specimen may be given :

### THE STRANGER.

#### AN EASTERN LEGEND.

An aged man came late to Abraham's tent ;  
The sky was dark, and all the plain was bare.  
He asked for bread ; his strength was well nigh spent,  
His haggard look implored the tenderest care.  
The food was brought. He sat with thankful eyes,  
But spake no grace, nor bowed he toward the east.  
Safe-sheltered here from dark and angry skies,  
The bounteous table seemed a royal feast.  
But ere his hand had touched the tempting fare,  
The Patriarch rose, and, leaning on his rod,  
" Stranger," he said, " dost thou not bow in prayer ?  
Dost thou not fear, dost thou not worship God ? "  
He answered, " Nay." The Patriarch sadly said :  
" Thou hast my pity. Go ! eat not my bread."

Another came that wild and fearful night.  
The fierce winds raged, and darker grew the sky ;  
But all the tent was filled with wondrous light,  
And Abraham knew the Lord his God was nigh.  
" Where is that aged man ? " the Presence said,  
" That asked for shelter from the driving blast ?  
Who made thee master of thy Master's bread ?  
What right hast thou the wanderer forth to cast ? "

“Forgive me, Lord,” the Patriarch answer made,  
With downcast look, with bowed and trembling knee.  
“Ah me ! the stranger might have with me stayed,  
But, O my God, he would not worship Thee.”  
“I’ve borne him long,” God said, “and still I wait :  
Could’st thou not lodge him one night in thy gate ?”

From a pamphlet recently issued by the Bryant Literary Union we glean the following interesting particulars regarding Mr. Bruce and his career.

Wallace Bruce, whose name bespeaks his Scottish ancestry, was born at Hillsdale, Columbia county, New York. As a lad he was distinguished for zeal in scholarship and love of literature. At the age of thirteen he translated a portion of the first book of the *Æneid* into English verse. He entered Claverack College at sixteen, where he took the valedictory. Went to Yale University, where he distinguished himself as scholar, writer, and speaker, winning six literary honours, including first prizes in English composition and public debate. Was made editor of the *Yale Literary Magazine* by unanimous vote of his class. In 1869 was admitted to practise law. In 1870 went to Great Britain and France ; was in Paris the night Napoleon was captured at Sedan ; walked over a large part of Scotland and England, studying the characteristics and customs of the people. On his return to the Hudson he adopted literature as his life-work, and was received with marked favour



on the lecture platform. In 1871 went to Poughkeepsie, N. Y., where he resided for eighteen years. In 1872 was invited to lecture on the Poughkeepsie Lyceum. It was a brilliant course, consisting of John B. Gough, Robert Collyer, De Witt Talmage, Daniel Dougherty, etc., but Mr. Bruce was awarded the palm of the winter entertainment, and his fame as a lecturer was established in the Hudson valley. From this happy opening in the queen city of the Hudson his fame widened throughout the State, and within two years he had all the appointments he was able to fill. Since that time he has appeared ten times on the Poughkeepsie Lyceum, always giving his new lecture as the opening or closing lecture of the course. Unlike many orators his fame began at home, and in the lecture field he has not been without honour "in his own country and in his own house." Between 1871 and 1889, in addition to orations and poems on public occasions, Mr. Bruce has lectured in almost every town and city in New England, the Middle and Western States, aggregating over two thousand appointments between New York and San Francisco. Mr. Bruce was appointed United States Consul to Edinburgh, July 1, 1889, from which post, after an honourable career, he retired on September 1, 1893. During his four years in Scotland he was invited to appear on

almost every lecture course in the realm, and for four years in succession before the Edinburgh Literary Institute. He also gave several lectures in England, and was enthusiastically greeted by the Parkside Institute of London.

While in Scotland he was made poet laureate of Lodge Canongate Kilwinning, Edinburgh, as a successor to Robert Burns, the peasant poet, and James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, besides being elected honorary corresponding member of the Scottish Society of Literature and Art, to succeed the poet, John Greenleaf Whittier. He accepted the invitation to write the poem for the unveiling of the Burns monument at Ayr. Over forty thousand people were present when the poem was read and it was pronounced the event of the day. He responded to "Burns clubs all around the world," at Edinburgh and Kilmarnock; gave an address at the unveiling of Symington's monument at Lead Hills; a poem at Linlithgow at the riding of the Marches; an address on Washington Irving at the old grammar school building of Stratford-on-Avon, and an oration on the occasion of putting up the Scottish Standard on the battlefield of Bannockburn. He also gave the dedicatory address at the unveiling of the Lincoln monument in Edinburgh, the first erected to Lincoln in Europe, the money for which was raised by his

exertions from American citizens as a memorial to Scottish-American soldiers.

On his leaving Edinburgh he was honoured with a farewell banquet by the Cap and Gown Society, a letter of esteem from the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce; was made honorary president of the Shakespeare Society of Edinburgh, and was tendered a complimentary farewell dinner by the citizens of Edinburgh. The Lord Provost and Town Council of Edinburgh also presented him with a solid silver loving cup, weighing seventy-five ounces, bearing the following inscription:—

Presented to  
Hon. Wallace Bruce,  
Consul of the United States of America,  
by the  
Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of  
Edinburgh,  
On His Retiring from Office in the City, as a mark of  
Esteem, and Recognition of His Services to Scot-  
tish Literature, September, 1893.

A grand reception awaited him on his return to America, and his services have been much sought after ever since. In the midst of this busy life a poem now and then appears in *Harper's* or *Blackwood's Magazine*, like bookmarks in the story of a successful literary and business career. His various publications have been good ventures;

his hand-book of the Hudson having reached a sale of one hundred and fifty thousand copies; and his poems, "The Land of Burns," "The Yosemite," "The Hudson," "From the Hudson to the Yosemite," "Old Homestead Poems," "In Clover and Heather," "Here's a Hand," "The Long Drama," and "The Candle Parade," have aggregated twenty-five thousand copies. His new volume, *Wayside Poems* will be issued in the early autumn by Harper & Brothers. In brief, whatever Mr. Bruce does he does well. He has made his way to the very front of the lecture platform without sensation, and has won his position by his qualifications as an orator, a poet and a genial man of letters. His poetry and oratory are both full of the sunshine and enthusiasm of his own nature. For grace, scholarship and magnetic power, he stands to-day without a peer.

## JESSIE, THE FLOWER O' DUNBLANE.



She's modest as onie, and blythe as she's bonnie ;  
For guileless simplicity marks her its ain ;  
And far be the villain, divested of feeling,  
Wha'd blight in its bloom the sweet flower o' Dunblane.  
Sing on, thou sweet mavis, thy hymn to the e'ening,  
Thou'rt dear to the echoes of Calderwood glen ;  
Sae dear to this bosom, sae artless and winning,  
Is charming young Jessie, the flower o' Dunblane.

AMONG the illustrious song writers which Scotland produced towards the end of the eighteenth century, was Robert Tannahill, a native of Paisley, in Renfrewshire. He was born in 1774 and died in 1810. A short life, certainly, but made conspicuous by the fact of its having been passed amidst such misery, disappointment and sorrow, and which was finally terminated by the poet himself in an unconscious and unguarded hour. To his admirers, however, it is some consolation to know that happy moments, like bright rays of warm and refreshing sunshine, occasionally penetrated and dispelled the gloomy atmosphere of his existence. The muses became his frequent visitors and they

must have thrown their inspiring mantle lovingly over him at times, as his writings—or, to be more correct, the lyrical portions of his writings—are all stamped with the stamp of true genius. Yes, a very short life was his, but a valuable one for all that, and the glorious galaxy of song which Robert Tannahill created and which he left to posterity when he passed beyond the world's cares and troubles, will perpetuate his memory for all time.

His songs are known and have been listened to in rapture wherever the English language is spoken, and one of them in particular, "Jessie the Flower o' Dunblane," is an especial favourite with all lovers of lyrical poetry. It has indeed attained a world-wide reputation, and deservedly so, as there are very few songs that surpass it for simplicity, sweetness and purity. But I have often longed for some further details regarding the heroine of the song. Was she a real personage, the same as we know Highland Mary, and many others celebrated in song and poetry to have been, or, did she simply exist, with all her charms, in the poetic imagination of the poet? If such a maiden really did exist at one time, where was she born, and when? Did she reciprocate the passion which she had kindled in the breast of her lover, or did she disdain to own, or even to notice him? Did she

marry during the poet's lifetime, or did she die before him ?

These and similar thoughts would usually occupy my attention after hearing the song sung, and only the other night did I alight on satisfactory answers to them. I was glancing leisurely through a late volume of *The People's Friend*, when I came upon an article signed "J. C." and entitled "Who was Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane?" As the article proved deeply interesting to me, I immediately jotted it down, and feeling assured that many of my readers will also be interested in a perusal of it, I append it herewith :

"I will now let the reader know the true history of Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane, and the cause of the disruption between her and Tannahill, which hitherto has been very little known out of the little circle to which the story was confined. I got my information from a very authentic source—namely, Jessie's faithful companion. I became acquainted with the old lady in this wise :—In the year 1856 I was working as a powerloom tenter with Messrs. Abercrombie & Yuill, of George Street, Paisley, now occupied by Messrs. Wilson, a Glasgow firm.

"It has long been a very common custom with the working classes in Paisley to pass their leisure hours in squads together. Well, during the three

years that I was in Paisley I was a member of what was called the "Twenty Squad," and a rare squad of fellows they were, indeed. They were all tradesmen of various kinds, with a few *littérateurs* among them. No one could be admitted as a member unless he proved himself to be possessed of some qualification—viz, could sing a good song, compose rhyme, tell a good story, draw a caricature, or write a good paragraph to the press. At one of our convivial meetings in the Globe Hotel, "Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane," was sung by a young lad. When the song was finished I asked the company if any of them could tell me about the antecedents of Jessie, for I had never heard in Glasgow, or any other place, who she was, where she was born, what her proper name was, and where she lived and died. The young lad at once replied, "Weel, man, if ye are ony way anxious to ken a' the particulars about Jessie, if ye like I'll tak' ye up to my grandmother's hoose the morn's nicht, an' she can tell ye mair about Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane, than ony ither person leevin' noo, for my granny was the only companion Jessie ever had in Paisley, baith in their young and auld days." I said to the young man that certainly I would feel very much obliged to him if he would be so kind as to introduce me to his grandmother.

"On the following night I went with the lad and



saw the old lady. She was in bed at the time, as she was very infirm through old age. To my queries she said that her maiden name was Jane Crawford, that her husband's name was Andrew Smith, a son of Bailie Andrew Smith, and that her husband had been a cotton spinner in his time, but left her and this world for a better, she hoped, in 1810.

“I observed that she had all her faculties unimpaired, and told that her young friend and I were well acquainted with each other, and that he had been letting me understand that she had known Jessie, ‘the Flower o’ Dunblane,’ in her young days, and that I would be very much obliged if she would be kind enough to me all she knew about Jessie and Tannahill. She replied that she would do so with much pleasure, as she had long known them and their affairs, Jessie and she being faithful companions from the time they had first met till death separated them. The old lady went on to inform me that Jessie’s parents had come from Dunblane to George Street, Paisley, and lived next door to her own people, and that Jessie and she in a short time got very much attached to one another.

The proper name of Tannahill’s heroine was Janet Tennant, but when the poet began to pay his respects to her he persisted in calling her

Jessie, as that, he declared, was a prettier name than Janet.

I asked why Tannahill did not marry his Flower of Dunblane, whom he admired so much? The old lady replied that she could easily explain that. The reason was that there was another young and good-looking weaver lad, who had as great a love for Jessie as Tannahill ever had, but who kept himself back from declaring his love, seeing the state of matters between Jessie and the poet.

But it happened, on a time when the district annual ball was to come off in the Freemasons' Hall, New Street, that the young man in question heard that Robert Tannahill did not intend going on that occasion, for some reason only known to himself. The rival lover then saw that there was an opening for him to make some movement, and, being minded of the adage that a "faint heart never won a fair lady," he at once made bold to put himself in Jessie's way, and asked her if she would have any objections to go with him as his partner to the ball, as he understood that Tannahill was not intending to be present. Jessie replied that she would have no objections herself, but that she would require to get Bob's consent before she could promise to go, and if he would call back on the following night she would be able then to give him a final answer to the question.

When Tannahill was spoken to on the matter next day, he said that he had no objections to offer to her going to the ball with any respectable party for a night, seeing he did not intend being there himself. Little did the unfortunate poet think there was any spark of love lurking in the breast of the gallant weaver for his "lovely, sweet Jessie." On the following night, according to promise, she let her admirer know that Bob (as she always termed Tannahill) was quite agreeable that she would go with him as his partner for that night to the dance. The matter was then settled to the unbounded satisfaction and joy of Jessie's new lover, but she was not aware of his warm admiration of her at this time.

When the night of the ball came on, Tannahill somehow got a little uneasy at the idea of his "Flower" being in the hands of another, and made up his mind to watch their movements on the way home from the ball. Having waited with much patience and anxiety till he saw them leave the place before daylight began to appear, he made all haste to the close where Jessie resided, and concealed himself in a corner where he could hear and see and not be seen. In a short time the pair came to the close, and took up their stand at the inner end of it at Jessie's stair-foot, where they kept chatting, as young parties do in a quiet place.

Just as the peep o' day began to appear, the poet heard them saying it was time to part before the folks would get astir in the land; but before doing so, the gallant weaver put his arm about Jessie's neck, and, as he firmly grasped her hand, he at the same time gave her a loving smack to boot; and this unfortunate incident pierced to the heart the sensitive-minded poet as he kept quietly crouching in his hiding place like a cat watching mice.

So sensitive was the high, proud spirit of poor Tannahill that the sound of that kiss, as it was wafted on the calm air of the morning into the listening ears of her lover, had the effect of snapping for ever the silken cord of love betwixt Robert Tannahill and Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane; for he subsequently said to Mrs. Smith that although he did give his consent to Jessie's going to the ball with the young man, it was not in the bargain that they were to behave as he had seen and heard them do.

It is quite evident that the green-eyed demon of jealousy entered there and then into the heart and soul of Tannahill; but although he had the prudence to restrain himself, and suppress the disturbed feelings that were like to rend his heart asunder, he quietly went home, but, instead of going to his loom, he went to his writing-desk,

and wrote the well-known poem, "The Farewell"—which, in one sense, is as bitter as gall, and sent it to Jessie that night.

The old lady in her own words spoke thus :

"Next mornin', after Jessie had got the letter wi' the fareweel address in it, she cam' rinnin' to me wi' tears in her een, an' her heart fu' o' grief, an' said—' Oh ! Miss Crawford, see this queer letter that Bob has sent to me.' I tane it oot o' her han', an' after readin' it a' owre, I shook my heid an' said—' Weel, Jessie, I wiuna say ae thing to ye an' think anither ; an' my min' o't is this—I haena the sma'est doot but what Bob is lost to ye for ever.' I wis verra sorry for what I had said, for it made her gie vent to muckle sabbin', sighin', an' clespin' o' her haun's. I did a' I could to soothe her a wee, but it wis o' nae use, for she gaed ower in a fit o' hysterics, but I got her brocht round in a wee, an' naebody kent onything about it but oorsels."

I next asked the old lady if she could repeat to me the words of the "Farewell Address." She replied that she could only repeat eight lines, for, as it was the words in these lines which stung Jessie to the heart, she never forgot them to the present day, and never would, she said. Mrs. Smith commenced :

But when I knew thy plighted lips  
Once to a rival's press'd,  
Love smothered, Independence rose,  
And spurned thee from my breast.  
The fairest flower in Nature's field  
Conceals the rankling thorn ;  
So thou, sweet flower, as false as fair,  
This once kind heart hath torn.

Miss Crawford's remarks to Jessie turned out to be correct, for the farewell address made a gap between them, and, whenever the gallant weaver heard of the disruption, he at once called on Jessie as soon as he could, and let her know that it had been long his heart's wish to have her for a wife, but, as there was a barrier in the way, he had been kept from speaking. Now that the barrier was removed, he considered himself justified in making an honourable proposal to her—namely, to become a helpmate to him for better or worse. Jessie replied that, if he called on the following night, she would have her mind made up, and would be able to say yes or no.

After mature consideration of the all-important question, and having consulted Miss Crawford on the subject, who drew Jessie's attention to the old adage that "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush ;" and, moreover, as Tannahill was a very high-minded lad, and would undoubtedly act as he said, by refusing the present offer she would

very likely lose both of them. Jessie held the same view, and, on taking everything into consideration, she made up her mind to accept the new suitor. When he called on her, according to agreement, on the succeeding night, standing in the same close where Tannahill had been watching them, she told the young man that she was betrothed to her former sweetheart, but, as it was not she who was the first to break off the engagement, she considered herself at liberty, in the sight of God and man, to look to her own interest, and accordingly gave her hand and heart to the gallant weaver.

They were married in a short time afterwards—viz., in 1798—and, on the raising of the volunteers in 1803, the husband of Jessie being a good musician, was appointed band-master of Colonel McKerrell's regiment. In after years all their family emigrated to Canada. Before parting with old Mrs. Smith, she said to me that, if she was spared till the summer, she would let me see the grave of Jessie in the Relief Churchyard, as she died in Orr Square, Paisley, in 1833, at the age of sixty-three. She added that, when younger and able to walk well, she often visited Jessie's silent grave, and shed tears on the green grass as it waved over her narrow house of clay, and concluded by saying: "For I ken weel that, if I had

been below the yird, an' her leevin', she wud hae done the same to me." I then bade the old lady good-bye, but I never saw her more, for she passed from this life before Nature put on her mantle so green.

Twenty-three years after this conversation—viz., in 1875, the late William Scott Douglas, a gentleman of much learning, with a strong taste for research, was anxious to get the real history of Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane. He managed to find out the address of some of her sons and grandchildren in Canada, and wrote to them. He got a reply, which was subsequently published in the *North British Advertiser*. The following are a few extracts from the article :

"I wrote to a son and grand-daughter of Janet Tennant, and got a communication from them. There are two sons, it appears, and several grandchildren still living. Janet Tennant was the name that those Canadians called her. They said that she had kept company with Tannahill for three years, and they had danced with each other in the Masonic Hall, Paisley, and that the tradition among them of the course of true love not running smooth was the failure of the poet to carry on a proper conversation in their long, lonely walks together, after 'the sun had gaed doon o'er the lofty Benlomond,' and that when their father (and



grandfather to some of them) came forward and offered Janet his heart and hand, he was at once accepted in preference to Tannahill, although he did write some sweet verses in her praise."

Those Canadian descendants of Jessie stated in their letter to Mr. Douglas that the sending of the "Farewell" was only Tannahill's version for the breaking of the engagement between them. Those parties cannot be blamed for what they say in the matter; but it is, I think, quite evident that had it not been for the kiss in the close, and the sending of the "Farewell," the disruption between them never would have taken place. It was also stated that on each recurring New Year's Day they, in a family capacity, sing the song—"Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane." They concluded by stating that their ancestor, Janet Tennant, was buried in the ground of the West Relief Church, Canal Street, Paisley, the number of the lair being 552. What those Canadians said in reference to their far-famed ancestor, was just in substance what the old lady in Paisley told me so many years previously, except as to the cause of the split between the once fond lovers.

In conclusion, I may state that since it has become pretty generally known where Jessie's grave is to be seen, when the annual awakening of our national interest in Tannahill takes place, on those

Gleniffer Braes he loved so well, and sang about so sweetly, thousands of the poet's admirers turn aside to see the hallowed spot of ground where underneath lie the ashes of the immortal "Flower" who broke her true lover's heart.

The little poem referred to above, "The Farewell," is as follows :—

Accuse me not, inconstant fair,  
Of being false to thee,  
For I was true, would still been so,  
Had'st thou been true to me ;  
But when I knew thy plighted lips  
Once to a rival's prest,  
Love-smother'd independence rose  
And spurn'd thee from my breast.

The fairest flow'r in nature's field  
Conceals the rankling thorn ;  
So thou, sweet flower ! as false as fair,  
This once kind heart hast torn :  
'Twas mine to prove the fellest pangs  
That slighted love can feel ;  
'Tis thine to weep that one rash act,  
Which bids this long farewell.

Tannahill never married. His death, like that of Burns, called forth considerable comment at the time, but the public appreciation of his genius has gone on increasing with the years, and recently an imposing monument to his memory and worth was unveiled with elaborate ceremonies in his native town.





VERSES ADDRESSED OR INSCRIBED TO  
JOHN D. ROSS.



THE TWA BOOKS.

BY HENRY URQUHART, BOSTON.

A poetical effusion dedicated to John D. Ross, New York,  
upon receiving his two volumes, *Celebrated Songs of Scotland*,  
and *Scottish Poets in America*.

KIND sir, yer twa books hae come hame  
For which my choicest thanks ye claim,  
I dinna ken if I can name,  
The meed that's due ye,  
For this kind act bestowen on me  
A stranger to ye.

The first, the Sangs O' Scotland clear,  
Proved sweetest music to my ear.  
It gird me laugh, or else the tear  
Cam' dribblin' doon,  
To read o' Meg frae Anster Fair,  
Or Sad Culloden.

Portrayed by sic-like able men,  
Scotia seems near (even here) again,  
Kindled by Burns' and Allan's flame,  
She looks right at us,  
An' a' the Stripes an' Bars and Stars,  
Mak their quietus.

Ah ! Jimmey Hogg and Walter Scott,  
Wha can forget what ye hae wrote ?  
A lump seems gatherin' in the throat  
When your muse whistles.

Like Roderick Dhu's hills, glens, and muirs,  
Wi' heroes bristles.

Then book the second, "Scottish Bards,"  
Is worthy o' oor best regards,  
A' seems deservin' o' rewards  
For doonricht merit.  
*Now is the time, no when they're deid,*  
Should men confer it.

A' rhyming fellow like mysel',  
Smelling o' peat an' heather-bell,  
I like their liltin' sonnets well,  
And honour gie them ;  
Wishing luck, health, an' gear  
Be ever wi' them.

Now, sir, 'gin I e'er reach New York  
I'll see ye's get a knife and fork,  
An' on a haggis, or a stork  
We'll baith gae dine.  
An' what the piper likes to charge,  
I'll pay the fine.

We'll chain up auld care in a tether,  
Tak' nae account o' wind an' weather,  
But 'round the Bards o' Nature gather  
Scotia's elect ;  
Her heroes, minstrels, poets, kings  
Shall be the subject.

So, noo, fare-weel ! but stop a blink  
Ere I tak' stumple frae the ink,  
A thocht I wad suggest, ye think  
When ye go coastin' ;  
Tak' the Fall River Line and come  
The length o' Boston.

---

## HIGHLAND MARY.

Inscribed to JOHN D. ROSS, Esq.

*Author of "Scottish Poets in America," and editor of  
"Round Burns's Grave," "Burnsiana," etc.*

BY DUNCAN MACGREGOR CRERAR.

FAIR flower who gav'st thy leal heart to the Bard  
That oft in noblest lays of thee has sung  
Melodious as thine own sweet Gaelic tongue,  
And cherished thee with sacredest regard.  
Pure as the sparkling dew on beauteous rose,  
And chaste as snow on lofty Cruachan's brow,  
Thy name and fame ; an influence good wert thou  
That breathed sweet fragrance after life's close.  
His hymn divine to thy "departed shade"  
Poured forth that memorable Autumn morn,  
The day thou wert from his fond bosom torn,  
Lives soul-inspired and never shall it fade.  
The ghoul who thy name hallowed dare defame  
Should read the hymn, then melt in burning shame.  
New York, 1893.

## OCTOBER.

(To JOHN D. ROSS on his Birthday).

BY BENJAMIN F. LEGGETT.

WITH blush of crimson and with tint of gold,  
He touches all the woodlands and they stand  
Transfigured in their beauty by his wand,  
As tricky fairies wrought in days of old !  
The harvest fields have all their treasure told,  
And brown and bare they lie through dreamful days  
That wrap the hills in mellow autumn haze,  
And with late asters star the stubbled wold :  
The frosted burs their thorny spheres divide,  
'Mid rustling leaves the ripened chestnuts fall,  
While happy children through the woodlands call,  
And childhood's echoes wander far and wide.  
So fair October's gray and gold appear !  
And lo ! your birthday passes down the year !  
October 23, 1893.

## KINDRED SOULS.

(To JOHN D. ROSS).

BY JOHN IMRIE.

THERE is a kinship of the soul  
 Known to the good and true,  
 Pulsive as needle to the pole,—  
 One such I've found in you :  
 Friends are life's chain of golden links  
 Let down from Heaven above ;  
 God yet will weld the whole, methinks,  
 All perfected in love !

THERE is a hope more sure than creeds,  
 To lead us home to God,—  
 The daily planting of good deeds  
 Shall flower Heaven's virgin sod ;  
 Each aspiration of the soul  
 In search of God and Truth,  
 Leads surely to that happy goal  
 Where dwells eternal youth !

THEY grow not old that Wisdom love—  
 Our bodies may decay—  
 But, oh ! leal souls shall soar above :  
 Death hastens Life's birthday !  
 Then, let us hold our Father's hand  
 Like children, and obey,—  
 If we but seek to understand,  
 He'll teach us by the way !

Toronto, Canada.

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 LINES
*To the Author of "Scottish Poets in America."*

BY ARTHUR JOHN LOCKHART, MINISTER.

THEY are not born in vain who live to bless  
 And solace others : who, while others strive  
 Out of the spoils of men to grow and thrive,  
 Abjure the meed of wrong or selfishness.



He does not live in vain who maketh less  
 The sum of human sorrow ; who inspires  
 Hope in the breast and kindles love's sweet fires ;  
 Whose charity relieves a friend's distress.  
 Long may he live, to whom is ever dear  
 A brother's fame ; whose eye can recognise,  
 Whose pen proclaim the merit that he sees,  
 Who, with his books and friends holds gentle cheer,  
 And whom a poet's song or maxim wise,  
 Can never fail to interest and please.

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TO JOHN D. ROSS,

*Author of "Scottish Poets in America," etc., on  
 his Fortieth Birthday.*

BY ARCHIBALD ROSS, MINISTER.

LIFE is to me a heritage of good,  
 That blossoms ever into summer flowers,  
 And thus I walk the sacred neighbourhood  
 Of minds congenial with the rolling hours.  
 Who ring auspicious birthdays for the soul.  
 So have I thought of thee, and I would fain  
 Ask blessings on the path that points the goal—  
 That joys and years may sing the long refrain.  
 For thou art here with us, an honest man,  
 One of the rarest of the human kind,  
 Looking for sweets within the poet's plan,  
 Clothed with the highest embassy of mind,  
 And thoughts all roseate with angelic grace  
 The opening buds of genius, meet our eye ;  
 This be thy great vocation here—to trace—  
 The beauty and the love that cannot die,  
 Gentle reminders of immortal life,  
 Which mar black perfidy, nor hate, nor strife  
 Can blur the beauteous picture thou has given.  
 On this October morn, thy natal day,  
 Unnumbered graces cheer thee on thy way,  
 As thou art cheering us with gathered hues of heaven.

October 23, 1893.

## GENEALOGICAL.

(To JOHN D. ROSS, on his asking for some biographical data, for one of his articles on Scottish poets. The article appeared in the *Home Journal* (N.Y.), Dec. 6, 1893).

BY HECTOR MACPHERSON.

My worthy frien', I scarce can tell  
Wherein my forbears' footsteps fell  
But haith, I doot that poortith snell  
Did nip them sair  
For ne'er in ae place wad they dwell  
Noo here, noo there.

My grandsire's is the oldest name  
Unto my listenin' ears that came :  
He ance midst scenes well kent to fame  
Stood staunch an' true ;  
He fought for glory an' his hame  
At Waterloo.

Syne he in my auld native toon  
When nigh full ninety years gaed roun',  
Laid a' his heavy burdens down,  
For a' man's dee ;  
An' noo in peace he slumbers soun',  
Fast by the sea.

Wha can Dame Nature's power restrain  
When youthfu' ardour fires ilk sein !  
My sire mang martial scenes was fain  
To stand or fa' ;  
While life's gay morn was a' his ain  
He gaed awa'.

Ere lang 'fore Scotia's foes he stood  
Where Death in strange an' fearsome mood  
Wrought 'mang the noble an' the good  
Maist direfu' ill,  
An' there he marked a brother's blood  
Stain Alma's hill.

Syne oot upon far India's shore  
The bloody brand of war he bore  
Avenging many a pang fu' sore  
    That bled at hame,  
Then wi' his wounds an' little more  
    To Scotland came.

Faith shone upon his early days  
He noo to cheer his aulder ways  
Does good, nor censure heeds, nor praise,  
    Aids a' he can ;  
Thus doon life's gloamin' noo he strays  
    An honest man.

My aged mither blessings cheer  
Her life's lang journey year by year,  
May sorrow ne'er again draw near  
    To wake a plaint,  
She's to the bosom far mair dear  
    Than queen or saint.

War's glamour for oor race is spent  
Where furious passions madly blent,  
Nor e'er midst bloody scenes intent  
    Was I to stray,  
Fain wad I rove in sweet content  
    In peacefu' way.

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## FRIENDSHIP.

TO JOHN D. ROSS, Brooklyn, N. Y.

BY ANGUS ROSS.

ALTHO' the sea between us roll,  
And mountain billows soar,  
No distance can control the soul,  
Nor chain it to the shore :  
So o'er the main on fancy's wing  
I place my hand in thine,  
And at my heart I feel a wring,  
And know thy friendship mine,

Tho' bound by a mysterious tie,  
 As e'er to mortal given,  
 I trust its registered on high,  
 And never will be riven.

62 Calder Street,  
 Govanhill, Glasgow.

## WE NEVER MISS THE WATER TILL THE WELL RINS DRY.

*Specially composed for John D. Ross's "Celebrated Songs of  
 Scotland."*

BY THOMAS C. LATTO.

BE lookin' out for fell auld age in sunny days o' youth,  
 Keep rain draps that ye dinna need ere comes the Autumn drouth.  
 Let aye some pennies ye can spare be canuily laid by ;  
 " We never miss the water till the well rins dry."

The wee bit stockin' fittie, that has its private neuk,  
 Comes just as handy in the end as weel-lined pocket benk ;  
 Tak' tent an' no be wasterfu', the winter's drawing nigh ;  
 " We never miss the water till the well rins dry."

But be na parsimonious, I canna thole the coof,  
 Wha sees the beggar at his door an' doubles up his loof,  
 O dinna let him gang his wa's wi' mutter'd bitter cry ;  
 " We never miss the water till the well rins dry."

There's plenty gude within this warld fu' quietly to be done,  
 Wark needfu' to be hurried through an' mair to be begun,  
 But Charity maun hae the means nor Pity lack supply ;  
 " We never miss the water till the well rins dry."

There's just ae water I wad hint that ne'er shortcoming knows,  
 The mair ye drink o't, aye the mair your pitcher over-flows,  
 The Water o' the Well o' Life ; come drink your fill an' try ;  
 It's brim is gurgling ever bright ; its fount is never dry.

Brooklyn, N. Y., 1886.

## THE SONGS OF SCOTLAND.

*Specially written for "Celebrated Songs of Scotland," edited by  
John D. Ross.*

BY JAMES KENNEDY.

How dear to ev'ry Scottish heart are Scotland's melodies !  
They sweeten life's dull atmosphere like perfume in the breeze,  
Blythe as the wild bird's artless notes the greenwood groves  
among :  
Earth's sweetest, noblest thoughts are those that warble into  
song.

Their mellow music circles round the glad earth far and free,  
Like light they leap from land to land and flash from sea to sea,  
Till waken'd echoes gladly ring in ev'ry vale and hill :  
And earth and air exultant catch the quick electric thrill.

How bright to fancy's eye they bring fair Scotland's classic land !  
The purple glory of her hills seems tow'ring high and grand :  
Her rustling wealth of golden fields wave 'neath the gladd'ning  
ray ;  
Her silv'ry waters flash among her valleys green and gay.

Fair flow'rets bloom in tints that mock the rainbow's dazzling  
dyes ;  
And daisies ope with modest grace their myriad starry eyes ;  
And all the glow of social life comes group'd in living throngs,  
Transfigured by the magic grace and beauty of her songs.

And where hath Love's impassioned throes e'er found so sweet a  
tongue ?  
No mimic frenzy mocks the heart when Scotland's songs are  
sung,  
Each artless word, each liquid note in perfect tones express  
The matchless might of manly grace and woman's tenderness.

And buoyant on the tide of time what glorious tales they tell  
Of freemen battling for the right, of gallant foes that fell ;  
Of heroes who tempestuous rose the tyrant's touch to spurn ;  
The glowing pride of Stirling Bridge ! The joy of Bannockburn !

O, Scotland ! raise thy crested head above the azure sea ;  
Thou art the home of worth and truth, the cradle of the free,  
Where e'er the eye of Time shall see bold Freedom's flag  
unfurled,  
Thy songs shall stamp thy sons among the freemen of the world.

Thine eye of pity ever melts at tales of human wrongs ;  
Thy seal is set, thy fame is fixed eternal as thy songs  
Whose clarion blasts shall bravely ring in freedom's battle van  
Until triumphant they shall hail the unity of Man !

New York City, 1886.





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